

INTRODUCTIONS

(TO VEDĀNTA TEXTS)

by

HIS HOLINESS

SWĀMI SATCHIDĀNANDENDRA SARASWATI

Adhyātma Prakāsha Kāryālaya

Holenarasipur - 573 211

Hassan District, Karnataka, INDIA

☎ : 08175-73820

Adhyātma Granthāvali

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Serial No. 202

Adhyātma Prakāsha Kāryālaya
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Hassan District, Karnataka, INDIA
© : 08175-73820

First Publication
Present Edition

Various Dates
1996



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Published by :

Adhyātma Prakāsha Kāryālaya
Holenarasipur - 573 211
Hassan District, Karnataka, INDIA
☎ : 08175-73820

Typeset by :

L.M.Graphics
1752/3, 'Akshaya Mansion'
Opp. Malleswaram Railway Station
Bangalore - 56 00 21

Printed At :

Sainath Graphics
Cottonpet, Bangalore - 56 00 53

PREFACE

Brahmalīna His Holiness Sri Sri SATCHIDĀNANDENDRA SARASWATĪJI (Born : 1880, Brahmalīna : 1975) was a crusader all his life for extricating, into their pristine purity and beauty, of Śaṅkara's commentaries on Upaniṣads, Gītā and Vedānta Sūtras (especially the last) from the mis-interpretations by later sub-commentaries, like Pañca-pādikā and Bhāmatī. By the time he cast off the mortal sheath, he was internationally recognised as an authority on Śaṅkara Advaita Vedānta, as freed from post-Śaṅkara Vedānta. His yeomen service in this field brought forth nearly two hundred books, in addition to extensive tours and "Vedānta Saptāhas" in India. Apart from his lucid and erudite translations of the Bhāṣyas on Prasthāna Traya, into Kannada, he contributed works in Saṃskṛta and English also. Some of these were based on scriptures and others were independent works. He had an uncanny ability to crystallize a whole book into a few pages and introductions now placed before the readers were aperitifs to Saṃskṛta works. Obviously, the publication targets readers who cannot read the original works in Saṃskṛta, but still hunger for the unique teachings in them.

Of the introductions, the one to VEDĀNTA PRAKRIYĀ PRATYABHIIJÑĀ, the *magnum opus* among Swamīji's works, delineating the historical development of the method of Vedānta, showing what the particular contribution of each author was for the development of Vedāntic Study and how, into a doctrine which propounded Intuition (as Ātman, one's own real nature) as the

voucher for all Pramaṇas (valid means of Knowledge) even logic was smuggled, distorting the whole beauty and destroying the hope for emancipation, has been separately published.*

In the work now placed before the readers, three are introductions to Saṃskṛta commentaries by His Holiness on Upaniṣads, one on Gītā and others are independent works, including on some PRAKARAṆA works. 'Vedānta Sāra' of Sadānanda and 'Vedānta Paribhāṣha' by Dharmarāja, often quoted in interpreting Vedānta, are all works of VIVARAṆA School, often departing from the Ācārya. Hence, to set the record right, 'VIŚUDDHA VEDĀNTA SĀRAḤ', AND 'VIŚUDDHA VEDĀNTA PARIBHĀŚĀ' were written. In PAÑCA-PĀDIKĀ PRASTHĀNAM, His Holiness clearly exhibited how Pañca-Pādika has twisted certain statements of the Ācārya to include a concept, which was not even noticed by the Ācārya. "Brahmavidyā Rahasya Vivṛitiḥ" expounds a meditative process : DAHARAVIDYA, contained in Chapter VIII of Chhāndōgya Upaniṣad. Three introductions in the present collection pertain to explanations on the Bhāṣya of the Ācārya on the Vedānta Sūtras.

'Naiṣkarmya Siddhi' is a Prakaraṇa text by Sureśwarācārya, who alone can be unequivocally taken as a direct disciple of the Ācārya. The text explains most

* "HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE METHOD OF VEDĀNTA" - published by Adhyātma Prakāśha Kāryālaya, Holenarsipur - 573 211 INDIA, Price A \$ 6. An English translation of the main work : THE METHOD OF VEDĀNTA (Tr. Prof. A.K. ALSTON) was published by Kegan Paul International, London, which did not contain the original introduction.

beautifully the practice of ANVAYA-VYATIREKA, succeeded by the knowledge arising out of listening to Vedāntic propositions, as causing emancipation. KLEŚĀPAHĀRINĪ is an independent and lucid commentary by His Holiness on this text. Lastly, MĀṆḌŪKYA RAHASYA VIVṚITIḤ was another unique work of His Holiness, to expound very clearly how the method used by Gauḍapādācārya in his KĀRIKAS ON MĀṆḌŪKYA UPANIṢAD, was neither borrowed from Vijñānavadin Buddhists, nor dependent on it, as surmised by a few writers.

The Publishers are grateful to 'SRI' International, 156, Suydam Road, NJ, USA through its president Prof. Shyam Bhatnagar, Phd., and Treasurer, Ms. Adolphina Hohé M.A. (Rotterdam) for having provided full financial assistance for publishing this book as well as the latest editions of 'Intuition of Reality' and 'How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta'.

Date : 19.5.1996

Publishers

Place : Holenarasipur

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SRI SRI SACHIDANANDENDRA SARASWATHI SWAMIJI

Born: 5-1-1880

Maha Samadhi: 5-8-1975

PART - I

I. ĪŚĀVĀSYĪPANIṢAD

(Introduction)

The Place of the Upanisad in the Vedas

One Bhāṣya ascribed to Śaṅkarācārya, on the Īśa or the Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad forming the fortieth chapter of the *Kāṇva* version, is being studied by the followers of the Śaṅkarādvaita school. It is also Known as the *Samhitōpaniṣad*, because it forms part of *Samhita*, the collection of the Mantras of the *Karmakāṇḍa* (Ritual-Portion) of that Veda, while the other Upaniṣads commented upon by Śaṅkara are mostly to be found in the *Āraṇyakas* of the Brāhmaṇa portion of the various Vedas.

Subject-matter of the Upaniṣad

Authors of some Bhāṣyas antecedent to Śaṅkara were of opinion that this Upaniṣad teaches the combined practice of *Karma* (ritual) and Upāsana (meditation), especially as the Mantras in it, are found in the *Karma-Kāṇḍa* (portion devoted to rituals). The author of the present Bhāṣya, rejects this interpretation and opines that these Mantras purport to teach the true nature of Ātman or the Universal Self. The latter portion of the Upaniṣad, however, according to Śaṅkara, does treat of the fruits of the combined practice of Karma and meditation.

II. INTUTION OF REALITY

(Preface)

The distinctive feature of the Upaniṣads, in contrast with the Sacred Books of various other religions, is that the Ṛṣis here have presented Brahman or Reality in a suggestive language calculated to lead the qualified enquirer to Intuit directly that the God proclaimed in the various faiths is his actual Self, and the very Substance of which all the universe is an empirical manifestation.

The nature of the Intuition of Reality and the process of reasoning which serves as an aid in arriving at It is the main theme of the first series of lectures. While there have been a number of interpretations of the Upaniṣads with a theological bias, Śāṅkara's has been privileged to stay as the solitary representation of an ancient tradition which claims to reduce the teaching of these revelations into one system and to show how universally applicable that teaching is for all time.

III. MINOR WORKS OF SRI ŚĀṆKARĀCĀRYA

(Preface)

This little book contains sixteen of the most popular minor Vedāntic Works generally ascribed to the great Śāṅkarācārya. Their one common feature is that they are all monographs dealing with either the preparatory path to be trodden by seekers, or with the identity with the

Supreme Self which every perfect soul feels on realising the truth. These writings contain little or no argument, for they are meant to be no more than finger-posts on the spiritual way, or sign-boards of the highest spiritual ideal for genuine aspirants with unwavering faith in instruction like this. For such, there is little doubt, these songs will be a source of hope, strength and joy.

It were well to remember, however that the truths of Vedānta depicted in these poems are not matters of mere faith and belief. For they relate to the Eternal Reality which is above time, above space and above causality and yet the inmost core of our being. The realization described here, is not a feeling got through affirmations or mystic experiments ; nor is it the conclusion of vain speculation which goes by the name of philosophy. Neither is it a mere theological dogma to which a mental assent is demanded. It is rather the immediacy of the Infinite as the Super Self in which all of us literally live, move and have our being. When that immediacy is attained it will be found that the mystic's experiences and the philosopher's speculations as well as the theologian's assertions are all invested with a meaning only in so far as they approximate to this bedrock of Reality. The Vedāntic method of seeking and finding this Reality, is barely touched upon here and there in some of the monographs included in this book. The reader who is interested in the study, is referred to my little book "Avasthātraya or the Unique Method of Vedānta" where it is discussed at some length.

A few observations with regard to the nature of Reality as taught by Vedānta, would be welcome to readers who read a book of this kind for the first time. It is called Brahman or the Infinite because it is not limited by anything. It is Pure Being without attributes, Pure Consciousness desirating no object, and Pure Bliss not derived from any object of sense. Being, Consciousness and Bliss are not to be regarded as abstracted from existent, conscious and blissful entities, but as the very essence and basis of all phenomena which are superimposed on it by Ignorance. The world of plurality containing numerous individual egos and objects, is but an appearance experienced by us in the waking state ; but as we pass through all the three states, waking, dream, and dreamless sleep, quite unaffected by those experiences, our Self as the witness of all three, must be taken to be altogether distinct from the states and their contents. And as both waking and dream are seen to be daily withdrawn into the Self in sleep which freely exhales them again, these must be regarded as essentially one with it. From this standpoint, therefore, the Self is seen to be above all the states, ever pure, ever free and ever blissful. Having absolutely no characteristics, its nature can be suggested to the men of the world only by negation of all super-impositions.

It need hardly be said that in order to realise this truth, the aspirant will have first to put himself in a disposition to understand the suggestion by going through a rigorous course of discipline in virtue of which he will be enabled to rise above all attachment to partial expe-

riences. The various steps in this course are briefly mentioned in some of the tracts given in the earlier part of this book. Detail information on the subject must be gathered from such works as the Bhagavadgītā.

It goes without saying that to appraise the philosophy of Śaṅkara properly, a genuine student should go direct to his universally accredited works, to wit, his commentaries on the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavadgītā and the Brahma Sūtras.

IV. ESSAYS ON VEDĀNTA

(Introduction)

The Nature of Teaching in the Upaniṣads

The Upaniṣads superficially read, seem to be intended to teach something about what they call Brahman or Ātman, about the universe, and the individual soul, but the varied expressions and style of exposition employed in them, are so bewildering that one is apt to doubt whether they contain any system of thought uniformly propounding any definite doctrine or whether they adopt any dialectical method leading the seeker to the principle they propose to teach. The language and style adopted to teach Brahman is apparently very confusing. All these works teem with various narratives, epigrams, symbolic expressions, metaphors and similes, which do not smell of any dialectical approach to truth. True, we do meet with dialogues, conversations and discussions and debates

sometimes ; but everywhere it appears to be a display of dogmatic arguments and analogies. On the other hand, we find express statements like 'This Knowledge is not to be attained (or cannot be confuted) by reasoning' (नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया). 'This can be well understood only when taught by another' ['प्रोक्तान्येनैव सुज्ञानाय प्रेष्ठ' (का. २-९)].

Conflicting Interpretations

The numerous commentaries embodying the conflicting interpretations of the several Bhāṣyakāras whose followers are extant to this day, only confirm this impression. For any scholar skilled in exegetics might bring out any additional system of his own with impunity out of these utterances of the ancient sages, if only he could adduce cogent reasons to show that his system is consistently built. And no one can rule out the legitimacy of the ingress of any system or systems in the future, each one of them resting its structure on the foundation of consistency and even on some individual intuition and experience to be gained through spiritual discipline.

Is there a Cardinal Doctrine or a Method, adopted in the Upaniṣads ?

In these circumstances, it is most necessary to discover the unique doctrine and the distinctive technique or the method, if there be one at all, which governs all the modes of approach to reality in these writings. If one could succeed in this attempt, that would be the source to provide the critical student of Vedānta with a clincher to help him out of this apparent maze.

The Evidence of the Sūtra-Bhāṣya

Actuated by a curiosity to find out the truth of the matter, and prompted by an instinctive feeling that there must be some doctrine and some method peculiar to all the Upaniṣads, I began to make a diligent search in the Bhāṣyas of the great Śaṅkara, the earliest writer on Vedānta, whose commentaries are available even now. As for the doctrine, it did not take a long time for me to find it out. For, the introduction to his Sūtra-Bhāṣya contained this unequivocal statement :

अस्यानर्थहेतोः प्रहाणाय आत्मैकत्वविद्याप्रतिपत्तये सर्वे वेदान्ता आरभ्यन्ते ॥

“In order to destroy this source of (all) evil, one has to attain the knowledge of the unity of Ātman. To this end, all the Vedāntas (Upaniṣads) are begun.”

The meaning of this proposition is crystal-clear : all the Upaniṣads have the uniform purport of teaching the doctrine of the One Ātman, on attaining which Knowledge, one's ignorance is wiped off for good. And another statement in the opening of the commentary on 'Vedānta Sūtra 1-1-5, makes this equally unambiguous remark :-

एवं तावद् वेदान्तवाक्यानां ब्रह्मात्मावगतिप्रयोजनानां ब्रह्मात्मनि तात्पर्येण समन्वितानामन्तरेणापि कार्यानुप्रवेशं ब्रह्मणि पर्यवसानमुक्तम् ॥

“So far it has been concluded that Vedāntic texts aim at producing the intuition of Brahmātman (the Infinite Self) ; that they are syntactically construed as teaching the 'Brahmātman' as their one purport, and culminate in Brahman which is without any connection with something that has to be done.”

This proposition means that the Upaniṣads serve the sole purpose of teaching the nature of the Self as Brahman in contradiction to the individual self, and that this knowledge of the Infinite Self, precludes the possibility of any duty to be done after its attainment. Of course, this is to intimate that in Śaṅkara's opinion, Upaniṣadic passages urging a person to do some religious work in order to attain some result, have nothing to do with texts teaching the nature of the One Infinite Ātman. This is in consonance with the previous statement in the Introduction which says that all Upaniṣads have the one purpose of teaching the doctrine of the unity of Self. But is this his individual opinion or has he any traditional background for his view ? Even supposing that he is supported by some tradition, how are we to reconcile ourselves to the fact that there have sprung up so many other Bhāṣyas each professing to inherit a tradition of its own and claiming to be the only correct interpretation of the Upaniṣads ?

In the first place, there are Upaniṣadic texts proclaiming the unity of Brahman or Ātman in the most unmistakable terms : "That which we perceive in front is the Immortal Brahman alone ; that which is behind is Brahman (alone) ; to the right and to the left, is Brahman (alone) ; that which is spread out both below and above, is Brahman. All this universe is Brahman the best" (Mu. 2-2-11), "And now, (is) the instruction concerning Ātman itself. Ātman alone is below, and Ātman (alone) above, Ātman (alone) behind, and Ātman (alone) in front ; Ātman (alone) is to the right, and Ātman (alone) to the left. All this is Ātman alone." (Ch. 7-25-2). Secondly,

one's misgivings about the dualists, are laid at rest by these two ślōkas from Gauḍapāda, the traditional Grand-preceptor of Śaṅkara :-

स्वसिद्धान्तव्यवस्थासु द्वैतिनो निश्चिता दृढम् ।

परस्परं विरुध्यन्ते तैरयं न विरुध्यते ॥

अद्वैतं परमार्थो हि द्वैतं तद्भेद उच्यते ।

तेषामुभयथा द्वैतं तेनायं न विरुध्यते ॥ गौ.का. ३-१७, १८.

“The dualists (who follow the Sāṅkhya or Vaiśeṣika, Buddhists or Jains etc.) firmly cling to their respective systems and contradict each other. But this system is not contradicted by them. For non-duality is the only Reality while duality is only its appearance. For them it is duality alone both ways (i.e. as Reality or apparance). Therefore this system is not contradicted by them.” GK. 3-17, 18.

As for the texts teaching the creation of multiplicity, Śaṅkara himself quotes two traditional Ślōkas from Gauḍapāda :-

मृत्लोहविस्फुलिङ्गाद्यैः सृष्टिर्या चोदितान्यथा ॥

उपायः सोऽवताराय नास्ति भेदः कथञ्चन ॥ गौ.का.३-१५.

“As for the creation narrated variously by means of illustrations like clay, metal, and sparks, it is (only) a device for leading (the seeker to the truth of unity) ; there is no difference in whatever way (we look at the matter).” GK. 3-15.

(Śaṅkara has adduced this verse in corroboration of his view that the effect (universe) is nothing other than the cause Brahman. see SBh. 1-4-14.)

अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते ।

अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा ॥ गौ.का. १-१६.

“When the individual soul awakes from the beginningless illusory dream-sleep, then he realizes his unborn sleepless, dreamless, non-dual nature.” GK. 1-16.

(This is adduced to corroborate Śaṅkara’s position that the states of creation, sustentation and dissolution of the world, are all illusory and not real. See SBh. 2-1-9.)

Two more examples may be cited to emphasize the fact that, according to Śaṅkara’s tradition, the Śrutis make use of empirical examples of cause and effect relation only to repudiate all real causality and to establish the Vedic non-dualism, their enunciation of Brahman as the *cause* of the birth, sustentation and dissolution of the world, being only a deliberate imputation of causal nature - a device to convince the critical enquirer that everywhere the so-called material cause, is the only real entity imagined to appear in diverse ways like an actor on the stage (नटवत् सर्वव्यवहारास्पदत्वं प्रतिपद्यते ! SBh. 2-1-18).

(१) ननु शब्दादिहीनं ब्रह्म जगतः कारणम् । बाढम्, न तु शब्दादिमत् कार्यं कारणात्मना हीनं प्रागुत्पत्तेरिदानीं वा अस्ति ॥ सू.भा. २-१-७, पा. १८९.

“(Objection :-) Is not Brahman devoid of sound etc., the cause of the Universe ?

(Reply :-) Certainly ; but the effect with sound and other characteristics, never exists either before creation or even now except in its essential nature as the cause.” SBh. 2-1-7.

(२) तस्मात्, यथा घटकरकाद्याकाशानां महाकाशानन्यत्वम्, यथा च मृगतृष्णिकोदकादीनाम् ऊषरादिभ्योऽनन्यत्वम्, दृष्टनष्टस्वरूपत्वात्, स्वरूपेणानु-

पाख्यत्वात्, एवमस्य भोग्यभोक्त्रादिप्रपञ्चजातस्य ब्रह्मव्यतिरेकेणाभाव इति द्रष्टव्यम् ॥ सू.भा. २-१-१४. पा. १९७.

“Therefore it has to be concluded that just as ethers like a jar-ether, are non-different from the universal ether, or just as mirage-water etc., are non-different from barren soil etc., being of the nature of appearing and suddenly disappearing and undefinable in their apparent nature, so also this diverse universe of things experienced and experiencers etc., does not exist apart from Brahman.” SBh. 2-1-14.

References to the Traditional Method in the Bhagavadgītā

The above-mentioned citations from the Sūtra-Bhāṣya, not only give us an insight into the main doctrine stressed in all the Upaniṣads, but also disclose the method of approach adopted in those writings to teach the Absolute (Brahmātman). For, while the Absolute is strictly without a second, we see here the deliberate superimposition of causal nature to Brahman, as a device to teach unity, and the abrogation of this property of being a cause by effectively negating the existence of the effect apart from its material cause. As Śaṅkara contends in his Bhāṣya (on 2-1-14) :

‘एष ब्रह्मणो दृष्टान्त आम्नातः । तत्र श्रुताद् वाच्यारम्भणशब्दात्, दार्ष्टान्तिकेऽपि ब्रह्मव्यतिरेकेण कार्यजातस्याभाव इति गम्यते ॥’

“This is an illustration used to teach the nature of Brahman. From the expression ‘*Vācārāmbhaṇam*’ (made up of words) used here, we have to infer that in the case of what is illustrated also, the non-existence of all effects

apart from Brahman (is meant).” Can it not be surmised from all this that Śaṅkara is referring here to a traditional method common to all the Upaniṣads making use of this device of deliberate imputation of certain properties to the Absolute just to reveal its real nature, the imputation being subsequently negated when that purpose has been achieved ?

References to this method are actually to be found in the Ācārya’s Gītā-Bhāṣya, to justify this hypothesis. There also, Śaṅkara discloses his anxiety to defend his view on the strength of the traditional method. For example, in the course of criticizing the view of certain thinkers who are of the view that it is impossible for the mind to grasp the Ātman, as He is formless, and that therefore permanent stay in Right Knowledge is impossible of attainment, that teacher says :

‘सत्यम् एवम् गुरुसंप्रदायरहितानाम् अश्रुतवेदान्तानाम् अत्यन्तबहि-
विषयासक्तबुद्धीनां सम्यक्प्रमाणेष्वकृतश्रमाणाम् ; तद्विपरीतानां तु लौकिकग्राह्यग्राहक-
द्वैतवस्तुनि सद्बुद्धिर्नितरां दुःसंपाद्या । आत्मचैतन्यव्यतिरेकेण वस्त्वन्तरस्यानुप-
लब्धेः ॥’ गी.भा. १८-५०.

“True, it is so for those who have had no access to the traditional teaching handed down by the Gurus (the master teachers), for those who have not studied the Vedāntas, whose mind is completely attached to the external objects of sense, and who have not taken the trouble to understand the nature of the valid means of knowledge. But for those who are of the opposite nature, it is altogether impossible to conceive the real existence of duality of the nature of subject and object ; for they see nothing other than the Consciousness of Ātman.” GBh. 18-50.

And he concludes,

“Therefore, cognition is quite well-known, and the cognizer also is quite well-known. Therefore, no effort is necessary for the attainment of knowledge ; effort is necessary only to remove the idea of the self touching the not-self. Therefore, perfect stay in Knowledge, is quite possible of attainment.” GBh. 18-50.

It is evident that Śaṅkara is referring to the traditional way of teaching Ātman by removing what is not the property of the Self. This he affirms in so many words elsewhere :-

शास्त्रं तु अन्त्यं प्रमाणम् अतद्धर्माध्यारोपणमात्रनिवर्तकत्वेन प्रामाण्यमात्मनः
प्रतिपद्यते न त्वज्ञातार्थज्ञापकत्वेन ॥ गी. भा. २-१८.

“As for the Śāstra, the ultimate means of knowledge, it attains the nature of being a valid means of knowledge by removing what is not the property of that Ātman, and not by directly reminding the nature of something previously unknown.” GBh. 2-18.

A second reference to this *Sampradāya* (tradition) is to be found in Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on Gītā 13-2, where he takes up for criticism the misinterpretation of the Gītā teaching “Know the *Kṣetrajña* to be Myself in all the *kṣetras*, O scion of Bhārata ! (क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत).” The follower of that school admits that *Kṣetrajña* is certainly Īśvara, and *kṣetra* is something else which is the object of *Kṣetrajña* alone ; “But”, this follower of the other school contends, “as for myself, I am a trans-migratory soul subject to pleasure and pain ; and I have

to bring about the cessation of this *Samsāra* by attaining the knowledge of both kṣetra and Kṣetrajña ; and then realizing the Kṣetrajña, the Lord, I must get and stay in the nature of that (Kṣetrajña).”

Śaṅkara makes these scornful observations with regard to this view :-

“He who thinks thus and he who teaches (another) that he is not the Kṣetrajña - he who holds this view - is a learned fool who hopes to make out that both bondage and release as well as the Śāstra, would be meaningful (only that way), that slayer of the Self is himself lost in confusion and confounds others, *because he is not in possession of the traditional method of the teaching of the Śāstras ; for he is thereby giving up what is expressly taught (here) and presuming what is not taught.* Therefore not being acquainted with the traditional (method of interpretation), he should be ignored like a fool, be he ever so learned in all the Śāstras.” GBh. 13-2.

Here the Gītā teaches that the knower of kṣetra, though seemingly an individual self, is really the same as Īśvara or the Witness in all beings. Śaṅkara says that one who twists this express statement to mean that this Īśvara is to be meditated upon (उपास्य) and not to be directly known as the Self, is making both an addition to and a subtraction from the true meaning. One who has been taught in the right way of interpretation, would never take such a rash step of misinterpreting the teaching. Evidently, Śaṅkara is here thinking of the traditional teaching of Gauḍapāda with regard to Upāśana (meditation of Brahman). For Gauḍapāda has these two statements to make concerning the subject :-

उपासनाश्रितो धर्मो जाते ब्रह्मणि वर्तते ।

प्रागुत्पत्तेरजं सर्वं तेनासौ कृपणः स्मृतः ॥ गौ. का. ३-१.

“The seeker who is dependent on meditation, depends on the born Brahman ; for him, all this is the unborn Brahman (only) before creation. Hence he is known to be a poor (knower of Brahman).” GK. 3-1.

आश्रमास्त्रिविधा हीनमध्यमोत्कृष्टदृष्टयः ।

उपासनोपदिष्टेयं तदर्थमनुकम्पया ॥ गौ. का. ३-१६.

“Seekers of Reality are of three grades - the lowest, the medium, and the best. Therefore, this Upāsana has been taught (for the benefit of the first two).” GK. 3-16.

The Upaniṣads themselves teach that the Brahman meditated upon should not be considered to be the Highest Brahman in its genuine nature ; ‘नेदं यदिदमुपास्ते’ (Ke.). This is a refrain of the Upaniṣadic teaching.

And lastly we meet with a statement of Śaṅkara which actually alludes to the true traditional method by its significant epithet. In commenting on the Ślōka ‘सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्’ (Bh. G. 13-13), he writes :-

“The collection of specific features in the Kṣetrajña due to the different conditioning associates is wholly unreal and therefore, He has been taught to be known as neither being nor non-being, by denying that (specific nature. But here) even the unreal form is presumed as though it were the property of (the Kṣetrajña) the knowable, just to bring home its existence (by describing it by the expression) ‘It has hands and feet everywhere etc’.”

Accordingly, there is (this) saying of the knowers of the traditional method (तथा हि संप्रदायविदां वचनम्) 'That which is devoid of all multiplicity, is explained by means of (deliberate) superimposition and rescission 'अध्यारोपापवादाभ्यां निष्प्रपञ्चं प्रपञ्च्यते'.

It would be profitable to note that both the superimposition and the negation, are used by the Śāstra or teacher as a device for revealing the true nature of reality which is inexpressible and inconceivable. This is not an attempt to remove any manifoldness that actually pertains to, or coexists with, Ātman. It is only an apparent manifoldness. As Gauḍapāda, proficient in all the techniques of the traditional method, crisply remarks :

प्रपञ्चो यदि विद्येत निर्वर्तेत न संशयः । मायामात्रमिदं द्वैतमद्वैतं परमार्थतः ॥ विकल्पो विनिवर्तेत कल्पितो यदि केनचित् । उपदेशादयं वादो ज्ञाते द्वैतं न विद्यते ॥ गौ.का. १-१७, १८.

“Manifoldness, no doubt, would have to be removed, if it (really) existed. This duality is only *Māyā* (a false appearance), (there is) Non-duality alone in reality. The thought-construct (of the distinction of the Śāstra, master and the disciple to be taught), would have to be removed if it were the (actual) superimposition of some one. This is a doctrine devised (only) for the purpose of teaching. When (Reality) is known, there is no duality whatsoever (in fact).” G.K. 1-17,18.

The Two Standpoints

This traditional method of teaching the Absolute, is responsible for the language and style employed in the Upaniṣads to amplify it still further so as to make the

teaching intelligible to the student. Narratives, mnemonics, enigmatic statements and illustrations, are all made use of for the purpose of *Adhyārōpa* (deliberate superimposition), which may be supposed to serve as a device to negate some superimposition of the human mind, and when that purpose has been served, the deliberate superimposition is invariably abrogated. Throughout the course of teaching, certain concepts are employed to indicate the inexpressible and inconceivable Absolute which can never be objectified by the mind, and language applicable to ordinary life, is employed in special senses by extending the significance of the words in order to make them suitable to suggest the relation of the phenomenal universe to the Absolute. This doctrine of the distinction of the common sense or empirical view (लोकदृष्टि) and the Vedāntic view (शास्त्रदृष्टि) or the Really real view (पारमार्थिक दृष्टि), is one of the most useful principles consistently used in the traditional method of the Upaniṣads. Śaṅkara was only following in the footsteps of his grand-preceptor Gauḍapāda in making use of this distinction in his Bhāṣyas. For, Gauḍapāda had already resorted to this device of superimposition from the empirical standpoint as a means (उपाय) and its final negation, when the intuition of the Absolute unborn Non-duality (उपेय) is achieved :-

स एष नेतिनेतीति व्याख्यातं निह्नुते यतः । सर्वमग्राह्यभावेन हेतुनाजं प्रकाशते ॥ गौ.का. ३-२६.

“Since (the Śruti) negates whatever had been used in explanation before, by pointing to Ātman as ‘This Ātman is the one described as ‘not this, not that’ for the reason that all that

is not to be taken (as truth). The Unborn shines forth of Its own accord," GK. 3-26.

The Present Work

While I have referred to the Traditional Method of Vedānta in several works¹ before, this one has been written with the sole purpose of offering an Introduction to the central doctrine of the Upaniṣads and to the One Method of approach uniformly employed in all of them in leading the enquirer to the intuition of the Absolute Reality which is his very Self. It is hoped that the beginner will find here ample material to enable him to discern how this method works in the other sub-varieties of approach not noticed here.

V. THE VISION OF ĀTMAN

(Introduction)

The Subject-matter of the Work

Perhaps there is no other point of Śaṅkara's interpretation of the Upaniṣads which has given rise to so many differences of opinion from his own followers as well as adverse critics, as the immediate Vision of Ātman and its direct means. (1) Is the so called vision a sort of immediate realization achieved through meditation and

1. Readers interested in the subject may be referred to the English Introduction to the 'Māṇḍūkya-Rahasya-Vivṛiti' (Samskr̥ta), 'How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta' and 'Śaṅkara's Clarification of Certain Vedāntic Concepts', published by the Kāryālaya.

Samādhi or is it the resultant knowledge that dawns directly from the teaching of Vedāntic texts about Ātman ? (2) What is *Śravaṇa* ? (3) Is *Manana* (Vedāntic Reasoning) of the same type as reasoning employed in discussions regarding empirical phenomena, or is it something totally different in kind ? (4) Why do Śaṅkara and other Advaitic Vedāntins repudiate Tarka (ratiocination) and yet indulge in reasoning about Ātman themselves ? (5) Is *Nididhyāsana* a sort of meditation (Upāsana) on Ātman as taught by Upaniṣads or something of a different nature ? (6) Does this last means lead to *Samādhi* (Trance) wherein the true nature of Ātman is directly realised, or is the so-called Vision of Ātman altogether different from that achieved in *Samādhi* taught by Patañjali or other Yōgic Systems ? (7) Are all the three means to be practised in succession before the Vision of Ātman is attained, or can any one of them lead to the vision itself ? (8) What is *Mōkṣa* or Immortality to be achieved by this Vision of Ātman ? (9) Is it an end to be reached in this very life, or is it an eschatological result ? These and other questions have puzzled many a scholar who has studied the various interpretations of Śaṅkara. The controversy among the followers of Śaṅkara cannot be supposed to have subsided even today, for, the view of Pundits of Vedāntic lore depends on the branch of Śaṅkara's interpretation - such as the Vivaraṇa and the Bhāmatī - on which each one of them relies as more authoritative. Such is the subject-matter of the work now presented to the reader. Yet it is not to be discarded as merely of academic interest. For, it concerns the very *summum bonum* of life to attain which every earnest enquirer into the teachings of Vedānta aspires.

The Attitude of the Present Writer

As a firm believer in the truth of Śaṅkara's Vedānta I have taken the proclamation of the Kāṭhaka Śruti at its face value :-

यदा सर्वे प्रभितन्ते हृदयस्येह ग्रन्थयः ।

अथ मर्त्योमृतो भवत्येतावद्ध्यनुशासनम् ॥ का. ६-१५.

“When all the knots of the heart are untied, then and there the mortal man becomes immortal. This is the whole teaching.” Ka. 6-15.

Yājñavalkya also winds up his teaching by declaring, ‘एतावदरे खल्वमृतत्वम्’, ‘Only so much, my dear, is the teaching concerning Immortality.’ I am fully convinced that Yājñavalkya was speaking of the eternal truth according to his conviction. He was referring to a universal truth when he said, ‘आत्मनि खल्वरे दृष्टे श्रुते मते विज्ञाते इदं सर्वं विदितम्’, ‘When, my dear, Ātman is seen, heard about, reflected upon and contemplated on, all this universe becomes known.’ (Br. 4-5-6). I have, therefore, stuck to the teaching of Śaṅkara when he says that when any person is concerned with the enquiry into the nature of Brahman as the universal Self, he has to rely on Vedāntic texts, not as an authority to be believed in, but to be verified by intuition also supported by Vedāntic Reasoning (न केवलं श्रुत्यादय एव प्रमाणम् ; किंतिहि श्रुत्यादयोऽनुभवादयश्च यथासम्भवं प्रमाणम् ।)

The Method Adopted in this work

As in my recent work ‘Śaṅkara's Clarification of Certain Vedāntic Concepts’, I have not only defined

and explained what *Darśana*, *Śravaṇa*, *Manana* and *Nididhyāṣana* mean according to the Upaniṣads as interpreted by Śaṅkara, but also quoted directly from Śaṅkara, mostly from the Sūtra-Bhāṣya, for my interpretation of the Upaniṣadic teaching regarding Intuition of Ātman and its means.

I have also shown where and how the sub-commentaries are not only in conflict with one another, but also in direct opposition to Śaṅkara, by producing necessary vouchers from Śaṅkara's classical works and the respective sub-commentaries. The line of argument adopted appeals not only to the original writings of these commentators as compared with the Bhāṣya, but also to reason based upon universal Intuition.

VI. ŚAṅKARA'S CLARIFICATION OF CERTAIN VEDĀNTIC CONCEPTS

(Introduction)

The Two Sets Of Upaniṣadic Teaching

Upaniṣads contain two sets of teaching regarding Brahman or Reality, addressed to two different levels of the mind. To the highest grade of aspirants, belongs the disciple who has attained the mental equipment necessary for entering upon the course of study, either in this birth or possesses an introvert mind as a result of discipline undergone in his last lives, qualifying him to grasp the teaching imparted in the Śruti.

This class of seekers comprises two grades. The first needs only reminding of the true nature of one's Self by the Śruti through an experienced adept who has himself experienced the truths of Vedānta, while the second requires guidance for the contemplation of the spiritual steps through which one has ultimately to reach that same Self. It is to this class of both the grades that the present booklet is expected to be of some assistance in the study of Vedānta.

The other set of Upaniṣadic teachings according to Śaṅkara, consists of injunctions for the meditation of the so-called Apra (lower) Brahman. This meditation is a mystical discipline, quite different from the practice of contemplation or the Adhyātma-Yōga (referred to in the present work on page 101), which leads the seeker to the direct realization of Brahman in this very life. Like the meditation taught in the non-Hindu religions, Upaniṣadic Meditation of Brahman also assures eschatological benefits in the Highest Heaven, here called Brahma-lōka. A separate treatise would be necessary for the guidance of the students of this class, whose practice of meditation is to be mainly founded on faith and hope. It may be remarked, in passing, that Upaniṣadic mysticism is perfectly rational in that it rests on the secure foundation of the proven results that can be experienced in this very life, by disciples of the first class mentioned above.*

* For the benefit of the students who are tolerably well-acquainted with Samskr̥ta, a small book called 'Brahmavidyārahasya-vivṛti' has been published in the Kāryālaya. It contains instructions in meditation of Apra-Brahman as well as the method of realizing Para-Brahman.

The Correct Vedāntic Tradition

Of the teachers whose Vedāntic works have survived up to our times, three famous repositories of this genuine tradition deserve mention here. It was Sri Gauḍapādācārya and subsequently Sri Śaṅkarācārya and Sureśvarācārya, that clearly pointed to the true line of demarcation between the two sets of Upaniṣadic teachings to which we have here drawn the students' attention. Before and after the time of those stalwart champions, we find that Upaniṣadic teachings have been uniformly treated by all interpreters as leading to some one of the systems which are mostly a conglomeration of the logical and mystical doctrines with a sprinkling of the Sāṅkhya or the Yōga system or both. In controversial works on Vedānta brought out in recent times we find an inclination to succumb to the temptation of using the phraseology of Neo-logic also.

Sri Śaṅkara was perhaps the first Vedāntin to lay emphasis on the traditional method of *Adhyārōpa-Apavāda* and to disentangle Upaniṣad texts purporting to reveal the true nature of Brahman as the non-dual Self of all the phenomenal world from the texts which have the sole purpose of enjoining meditation. He was also the first to extricate Upaniṣadic teaching from the exclusively theological trends to which they were drifting in the hands of the ancient Advaitins.

His clarification of certain Vedāntic concepts and principles of interpretation to be applied to Upaniṣadic teaching as contrasted with that of the Karma-Kāṇḍa (portion of the Vedas treating religious works) has greatly helped us to see how Upaniṣads are not mere authorita-

tive mystical utterances to be implicitly believed in, but contain certain revelations which take us to direct intuition here and now of undeniable verities with regard to our Real Self.

It is with the object of drawing the attention of the critical student of Śaṅkara's Vedānta to the genuine aspect of Vedāntic reasoning based upon intuition, that I have been making a sustained attempt by writing a number of books in Samskr̥ta and English as well as in Kannada. The following pages contain a systematic account of the clarification of certain Vedāntic concepts as presented in Śaṅkara's classical writings, especially in his Sūtra-Bhāṣya.

VII. MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ŚAṅKARA

(Preface)

Earnest students of Sri Śaṅkarācārya's Advaita system, have reason to be bewildered in their attempt to ascertain his exact teaching about the message of Upaniṣads to seekers of the Highest Good universally believed by orthodox followers of the *Sanātana Dharma*, to have been promised by those sacred revelations to man.

This is so neither because of the obscurity of style or the absence of precision of thought expressed in the writings of Śaṅkara himself, nor because of the paucity of explanatory literature on the subject. On the contrary, there are two fertile sources of this confusion. In the first place, Śaṅkara's works are now generally studied and

taught by learned Pundits who are mostly guided by popular Samskr̥ta works relying on one or more of the conflicting sub-commentaries claiming to propound Śaṅkara's thought. And in the second place, neither the professors nor the oriental scholars, who undertake to write on the subject in English, seem to be earnest in entering upon a comparative study of the varying estimates of Śaṅkara presented by the sub-commentaries and the adverse critics (of Śaṅkara) belonging to other schools on the one hand, and in the original works of Śaṅkara, independent of the commentaries on the other, before arriving at any conclusion about the genuine views of that Ācārya.

I have attempted to invite the attention of scholars in general and the Vidwāns of our country in particular, to the urgency of such a study, by publishing several pamphlets and books as well as a few elaborate works in Kannada, Samskr̥ta and English. Owing to my rapidly failing health and eyesight, I have now thought it fit to condense my views within the limited compass of this small book appealing to the thoughtful Vedāntins of our country to consider how far my conclusions are acceptable and to offer their candid opinion in the matter, so that all the assessments of my humble opinions, may be consolidated in the symposium proposed to be published by the Kāryālaya.

The booklet now presented to Vedāntins for critical appreciation, naturally contains my personal views as a sample of what is expected from the contributors to the forthcoming symposium.

(1) I have taken the Sūtra-Bhāṣya as the Chief court of appeal for the obvious reason that it is an exegetical

work which comprehends not only Śaṅkara's considered conclusions and lays down principles by which an interpretation of Advaita-Vedānta, has to be guided, but also because it convincingly shows the critical qualified seeker how the truth of Advaita Vedānta may be intuited as corresponding to the real nature of the Self of each one of us.

(2) Quotations from Gītā-Bhāṣya or any other commentary, are drawn upon only to confirm any conclusion based upon the Sūtra-Bhāṣya.

(3) I have tried to classify the important misconceptions under particular heads, and have produced my vouchers mainly in the form of citations from the Sūtra-Bhāṣya.

And lastly (4) I have tried to show how Śaṅkara's teachings can be corroborated by the declarations of the only traditional teacher, Sri Gauḍapādācārya, whose classical work is still available for reference.

VIII. VEDĀNTA OR THE SCIENCE OF REALITY

(Introductory Remarks)

The Special Features of the Work

The first edition of the late K.A.Krishnaswamy Iyer's 'Vedānta or The Science of Reality' which appeared nearly thirty-five years ago (1930), became out of print very soon. There has been an incessant demand for the

book both here and from overseas, thus attesting to the vitality of the work. This is due primarily to the circumstance that to this day this is the only work in any language which, as the author claims, “treats Vedānta as a science based on common life and experience”.

A second feature that enhances the value of the work is that the author does not try merely to record the achievements of ancient teachers. The work is not merely that of an antiquarian or of an interpreter trained in the traditional method, but of a genuine Vedāntin who had himself sought and found illumination in the intuition of that Reality which is the subject-matter of his work. At any rate he writes with the confidence of an enlightened soul, and not in the vein of one who reports at second hand. This should be certainly of great importance to earnest seekers of rational interpretation of intuitive truths.

Another special feature of this production is the engaging style which would be most welcome to the modern students of Vedānta, many of whom are scared away by translations or adaptations of Samskr̥ta works which are dressed up in the sombre dialectics besprinkled with illustrations which have little or no bearing on modern life. The critical and comparative discussions of western Systems interspersed throughout are sure to render the study of Vedānta more lively and attractive especially to our University students as well as to Westerners.

Tradition Followed

It is in the fitness of things that this precious work is dedicated to Sri Śankara, for it is in the light of that

Ācārya's Bhāṣyas that Vedānta has been expounded here. I am not quite sure that Sri Iyer was aware that there had been monists belonging to other traditions of Vedānta also before Śaṅkara's own school rose to prominence, but it is sufficient for our purpose that he refers to Śaṅkara's tradition alone in unmistakable terms when he says, 'I propose to consider in this work only the position of the Advaitin, who boldly proclaims Immortality and beattitude as the instantaneous fruits of knowledge.' And he repeatedly refers to Śaṅkara and his grand-preceptor Gauḍapāda in support of his own statements.

It would be therefore, profitable to remind ourselves how the Vedānta brought out of Upaniṣads by Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda, differs from all other systems both in the comprehensiveness of its subject-matter and the peculiar method it employs. Thus with regard to the subject-matter of the Upaniṣads, Śaṅkara writes as follows, evidently taking his stand on the Śvetāśvatara (6-1) :

“ननु आत्मा अहं प्रत्ययविषयत्वात् उपनिषत्स्वेव विज्ञायत इति अनुपपन्नम् ।
न तत्साक्षित्वेन प्रत्युक्तत्वात् । न हि अहं प्रत्ययविषय कर्तृ व्यतिरेकेण तत्साक्षी
सर्वभूतस्थः ; समः, एकः, कूटस्थनित्यः, पुरुषो विधिकाण्डे तर्कसमये वा
केनचित् अधिगतः सर्वस्य आत्मा । अतः स न केनचित् प्रत्याख्यातुं शक्यः ;
विधिशेषत्वं वा नेतुम् । आत्मत्वादेव च सर्वेषां न हेयः ; नाप्युपादेयः ॥”

Objection : ‘The self being the object of ego-notion (self-consciousness), it is not right to say that it is known exclusively from the Upaniṣads.’

Reply : No. For, this objection has been met by stating that the real Ātman is the witness of that ego. (To explain) : Neither from the portion of injunctions (of religious works) nor from the

speculative systems has any one learnt about the Witness distinct from the active ego who is the object of the me - notion, the Witness present in all beings, the uniform one, the One absolutely changeless Puruṣa, the Self of everyone. Hence He can neither be denied by any one, nor regarded as subordinate to an injunction. And for the selfsame reason (that He is the Self of everyone), he can be neither denied nor courted. (SB. 1-1-4)

It is evident from the above quotation that, according to Śāṅkara, (1) the subject-matter of Vedānta is Brahman or the Highest Reality, which as the Witnessing Self of all of us can be immediately experienced ; (2) this Universal Self is not only disitinct from the objective world, but also from the ego, and consequently from the body, senses and the mind which are owned by the ego, and therefore (3) it is beyond the scope of the dogmas of theology which rest on faith, as also beyond the surmises of speculative philosophy inasmuch as it is the most indubitable fact of human experience which can be neither affirmed nor denied, neither proved nor disproved by reason, and neither to be believed nor rejected as an impossible fact. As another Śruti text declares it is (यत् साक्षादपरोक्षाद्ब्रह्म य आत्मा सर्वान्तरः) 'the direct, most immediately intuited Brahman, our inmost Self' (Br. 3-5-1).

The author of the present work therefore, could not have chosen a better sub-title for it than 'The Science of Reality' for, this descriptive epithet in itself points to the highest knowledge vouchsafed to man, viz., that Truth and Reality coalescing in one ultimate entity are intuited once for all instinctively by each one of us. He rightly avers that "the conviction of our own reality is based on

intuition. If the whole world dispute it, that conviction will not be affected in the least. But when the Reality of anything other than our Self has to be determined we insist on unimpeachable evidence”.

As for the status of the not-self, Upaniṣads declare “(ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम्), the whole of this Universe is verily the most lovable Brahman” (Mu.2-2-11); “(ऐतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वं तत् सत्यं स आत्मा तत्त्वमसि), All this is essentially one with this Being ; that is real, that is the real Self, that thou art” (Ch 6-16-3). The so-called not-self then is really the manifestation of Brahman, but in so far as it is an appearance it is unreal, the only Reality being Brahman. Hence Śaṅkara writes “(कथं पुनरिदानीम् इदं सर्वम् आत्मैवेति ग्रहीतुं शक्यते ? चिन्मात्रानुगमात् सर्वत्र, चित्स्वरूपतैव इति गम्यते ।) But how can we know that all this is really Ātman ? We conclude that it is essentially consciousness itself inasmuch as Ātman’s consciousness is traceable everywhere.” (Br. Bh. 2-4-7). It follows, therefore, that in order to recognize Reality free from the seeming taint of appearance we have to remove the latter by true knowledge. Of course, the knowledge of Brahman can never be of the conceptual sort since, as the witnessing consciousness, it is intuited as pervading the whole gamut of concepts and percepts. As the Śruti says, “you cannot know the knower of knowledge..” (Br. 3-4-2). How then do Vedāntins talk of the knowledge of Brahman ? Śaṅkara replies : “When the false identification with the not-self is removed, the intrinsic nature of Ātman alone remains (स्वाभाविको यः स केवलो भवति ।) and this is what we mean by saying that

Ātman is known. "Ātman by himself is unobjectifiable by any means of knowledge." (Br. Bh. 4-4-20).

The Method of Vedānta

And now for the unique method of Vedānta. We have seen that its subject-matter is quite unlike that of any speculative philosophy. Vedānta does not set before itself the problem of explaining the Universe by means of logical deduction, or the task of widening the area of human knowledge by trying to harmonize the natural sciences as far as possible. Any attempt to solve such problems is of course quite in keeping with the view-point of systems which restrict their idea of the Universe either to its subjective or objective portion. Vedānta, however, is not satisfied with partial views. Its view is, as we have seen, 'based on intuition and conscious experience leaving out no feature of life in its widest sense' ; and what is more, it claims to have discovered the essence (Ātman) of the Universe as a whole, and assures us that 'its realization is possible here and now for every one that has the desire and capacity for it'. It follows that its method must be suitable for the purpose of exposing the apparent unreality which the common sense view is apt to take for Reality itself. This method has been briefly formulated in a half-verse of ancient teachers of the tradition quoted by Śaṅkara in these words "(तथा हि संप्रदायविदां वचनम् - 'अध्यारोपापवादाभ्यां निष्पन्नञ्च प्रपञ्च्यते' इति ।) And so runs the saying of those versed in the traditional method : That which is devoid of all distinctive features is explained through deliberate super-imposition and rescission" (GBh. 13-13).

The method itself consists in leading the seeker to truth through a concessional view taken up for the time being for the sole purpose of weaning his mind from a habitual error and subsequently abrogating the assumed view also. It is illustrated in Śaṅkara's Brhadāranyaka Bhāṣya by the pedagogical instances of employing written symbols in order to instil the ideas of articulate sounds and abstract numbers into the pupil's mind.

I have explained the principles involved in this method at some length elsewhere with special references to five important sub-varieties of it. Of the several special varieties employed in the Upaniṣads, however, the so-called Method of Avasthas or the three states of the soul is perhaps the most convincing and easily understood, for it assumes nothing that is not already familiar to everyone in life, and takes the enquirer straight to the intuition of the Witnessing Consciousness at the back of the ego, if only the seeker is prepared to give up his usual predilection for the waking state and has acquired the capacity to introvert and examine the nature of his experiences as he passes through the three modes of consciousness, viz., waking, dream and deep sleep. This is the device utilized in the Māṇḍūkya, the smallest of Upaniṣads, and turned to account by Gauḍapāda, for explaining the most fundamental doctrines of Vedānta in his memorable Kārikas on that Upaniṣad. The author of this work, Sri Krishna-swamy Iyer is perhaps the very first Vedāntin who has made a sustained attempt to demonstrate how this variety of the method is prolific of beneficial results in its application to the discussion of most of the problems of modern philosophy.

Application of the Method

The following are the principal steps of reasoning to which the author has repeatedly called our attention in arriving at the truth of Reality by the employment of the method of three states or '*the tri-basic method*' as he calls it in contrast with the mono-basic method which takes the waking state alone as the basis of its speculation. (1) There are three and only three distinct states of consciousness which every one of us experiences. (2) These states are neither successive events in the same time-series nor three different entities or things occupying the same space ; for, while waking and dream present their own world characterized by different orders of time and space there is no one time or space common to both, and all notion of time or space is abolished in deep sleep. (3) Hence it is wrong to imagine that the waking ego really remembers sleep or dream as having been experienced in the past. There is a distinct ego for each of the dreams as well as for waking, and no ego experiences sleep. (4) The waking-world is a concomitant of waking-consciousness just as the dream-world is bound up with dream-consciousness. Each one of the states, therefore, whether waking or dream, includes its own world, and so the latter can never overpass its state. (5) While ideas, feelings and other properties of the mind do change their basis, the Witnessing Consciousness which testifies to the changes of the ego cannot change, for if it did we could not be aware of the change at all. It must be granted therefore, that Witness is the same for all states. Only, while the witness of waking and dream has for its object a world made up of the ego and the non-ego which thrive

there in a subject-object relation, it ceases to have any such object in deep sleep. We therefore, intuit it only as Pure Consciousness in the latter state. (6) Memory of sleep or dream is possible only because of this Pure Consciousness persisting through all the states. (7) Sleep and dream are known to us only through intuition, and the knowledge thus acquired is afterwards thrown into the forms of the intellect so that we naturally conclude that it originates from the waking intellect ; (8) Waking and dream are distinguished only from the waking point of view, but they can never be identified as such while they last, for dream exhibits all the elements of waking, and possesses no characteristic mark by which it could be recognized or distinguished from waking. (9) We have therefore, to conclude that Pure Consciousness has only two modes, the dynamic mode (waking or dream) when it seems to be split up into the ego and the non-ego in subject-object relation, and the static (sleep). (10) Strictly speaking, sleep is not a state at all. We call it an unconscious state because we are insensible then to the ego or the non-ego, but that is only from the waking point of view. But sleep in itself is really Pure Consciousness and nothing else ; we as Pure Consciousness are not aware of anything else then, because there is nothing else to be aware of. (11) From this correct thought-position, we see that Pure Consciousness is the only Reality. It is neither dynamic nor static, and since we daily experience that both waking and dream with all their seeming distinctions of the ego and the non-ego are completely merged in sleep or Pure Consciousness, all the so-called states are really one with this Pure Conscious-

ness. All talk of change or changelessness in the latter is meaningless. (12) Pure Consciousness is Pure Being and Pure Bliss all in one. It is pure in the sense that it has no second beside it.

Vedānta as a positive science founded on reason, intuition and experience steers clear of all difficulties incidental to partial views whether of physical science which has committed itself to an objective view of mind as well as of matter, or of realistic philosophies which aim at a critical view of the universe and try to generalize and harmonize the conclusions of the special sciences, or again of idealistic systems which speculate on the basis of the loss of the Intellect. All System-Builders, whether of the East or of the West, have confined their attention to the waking state to the exclusion of dream and sleep and to that extent their systems have been necessarily defective. Furthermore, while the Highest Reality is universally intuited in our sleep to be identical with our deepest Self, these systems have been treating it as though it were an external object, and are ingeniously trying to identify it either with some logical category such as substance, quality, action, universality or relation, or with some faculty of the waking-mind such as idea, will or feeling. It is evident that no amount of generalization or criticism can ever land them at genuine Reality. As the author remarks, "these thinkers have traversed the whole gamut of human thought, and have failed to arrive at finality". No wonder that the philosophic area of the present day appears to be an arena of unending conflicts. The critical survey of modern thought to which a considerable portion of the present work is devoted, whatever

the judgment of scholars be on its merits as a historical account, must certainly serve, as the author claims, as a powerful illustration to show "how the absence of a tri-basic view rendered each thinker's conclusions mere opinions, theoretical thought positions, which failed to produce general conviction, and which made it necessary as well as possible for every successive thinker to strike out a new path for himself, which terminated again in another wilderness".

Benefits of the Method

As for the beneficial results that follow from the adoption of the comprehensive method of Vedānta, Sri Iyer illustrates them by first expounding the theory of the three degrees of reality and then showing how (1) Vedānta overcomes scepticism; (2) it rises above the charge of solipsism ; (3) it can solve the problem of Appearance and Reality convincingly ; (4) it provides a sure basis of ethics and a definite system of eschatology ; (5) it accounts for the apparent difficulty felt in the problem of perception ; (6) it reconciles the conflict of idealism and realism, and finally (7) how it supports and justifies the essential dogmas of theology by offering satisfactory proofs or consistent theories and explains the principles of aesthetics by a reference to reality in its aspect as Pure Bliss.

Mysticism and Vedāntic Knowledge

In the course of the discussion of the question of Appearance and Reality it is shown how Primeval Ignorance and mistaken transference of the ego and the non-ego, are primarily responsible for the bondage of the soul's error, and in the chapters on Knowledge and Release

and on Practice and Reflection it has been explained how release from that bondage is possible in the waking or empirical life alone by contemplation of the nature of Reality since ignorance has an import in the sphere of the intellect only. While we find frequent references made to trance or *Yōgic Samadhi* and its rationale disclosed in the light of Vedānta, the author has been careful to invite our attention to the fact that mystic trances only confirm our sleep experience and are not indispensable to Vedāntic knowledge. Thus the book may be said to contain a complete exposition of all the essentials of Vedānta as it offers detailed suggestions on the practical side of the system no less than a systematic exposition of its positive aspect as the science of Reality.

Traditional Authority for Certain Interpretations

As the author has declared in so many words that Upaniṣads of which Śaṅkara is the greatest exponent, reveal the deepest spiritual experience of all mankind, it is to be expected that Vedāntins who are devotees of the orthodox ways of interpretation would be glad to know how far Sri Iyer has been faithful to the spirit of the Upaniṣads and Śaṅkara's Bhāṣyas. It would be therefore, profitable to consider certain points on which the present work might seem, at first sight, to diverge from either source.

It has to be noted, however, that the value of the work would by no means be minimized even if ultimately it were found that it differs from any authority on any particular point. For, as the author says at the very outset, "Vedānta demands no blind allegiance to any sect or school and respects no traditions or biblical authority in

its search after truth". And he has the full support of Śaṅkara himself who has made this most unequivocal statement with regard to the validity of the Vedas themselves : (न हि वचनं वस्तुनोऽन्यथाकरणे व्याप्रियते, किं तर्हि यथाभूतार्थज्ञापने ।) "A text is not going to change a fact, but only to make it known as it is" (Pr. Bh. 6-3) ; (न हि श्रुतिशतमपि शीतोऽग्निः अप्रकाशो वा इति ब्रुवत् प्रामाण्यमुपैति ।) "Even a hundred texts declaring that fire is cold or that it emits no light would not be a valid source of knowledge" (GBh. 18-66). Nevertheless, that the work has striven to be true to the original sources would undoubtedly make it more persuasive for beginners.

In the very first place, we shall enquire if the procedure of the Māṇḍūkya has been followed by the reasoning here. At first sight, it would appear that the author describes the method as an examination of the three *Avasthas* in contrast with the Śruti which describes aspects (*padas*) of Ātman and not the states. The result, however, would be the same so long as we stick to the witnessing self in each of the states during the investigation. The name *Vaiśvānara* has been used by the Upaniṣad to indicate that the whole of the state is taken to be the *Upādhi* or conditioning factor or perspective in which we look at the Self. (सर्वस्य प्रपञ्चस्य साधिदैविकस्य अनेनात्मना चतुष्पात्वस्य विवक्षितत्वात् । एवं च सर्वप्रपञ्चोपशमे अद्वैतसिद्धिः ।) "The whole world external and internal, has been taken along with this Ātman as one of the four aspects postulated, and so when all the world is dissolved we arrive at the one Ātman without a second" (Ma. Bh. 3). The author has taken care to preserve this feature of the method by

asserting that “what is known as the world including our body, comes and goes with our waking”. In this way he has managed to keep up his fidelity to the orthodox line of thinking which maintains that “the conception of the universe as a whole is fundamental to the conception of Reality” without involving the reader, in the maze of technical terms like Vaiśvānara.

In the second place, let us see if he has been true to the Upaniṣad and Śaṅkara when he says that the ego merges in Reality itself in sleep. Is that the last step in the reasoning ? If so, why does the Upaniṣad speak of *Turiya* or the fourth aspect of Ātman ? Here we have to remember that it is the same Brahman or Ātman that is spoken of as the Witnessing Self in each of the states. It is true that the Māṇḍūkya defines sleep as that state where the Ātman ‘desires nothing and sees no dream’ (न कञ्चन कामं कामयते न कञ्चन स्वप्नं पश्यति), but that only implies that the object of the Witnessing Consciousness in the other two states is an illusory appearance, while no such object is experienced here. In fact, Upaniṣads invariably declare that the absence of being aware of an object in sleep is because of the soul being merged in his own essential self as Pure Being (सति संपन्न, Ch. 6-9-1) or Pure Consciousness (प्राज्ञेनात्मना संपरिष्वक्तः, Br. 4-3-21). And Śaṅkara explains this by saying that the soul in this state is in his own true form (स्वरूपस्थः) and is called *Prāṇa* because, ‘Pure Consciousness is exclusively his own nature while the other two have an adjectival consciousness also (प्रज्ञप्तिमात्रम् अस्यैव असाधारणं रूपम् इति प्राज्ञः ; इतरयोस्तु विशिष्टमपि विज्ञानमस्तीति)’. He is the omniscient Lord of all (एष सर्वेश्वरः

सर्वेशः) in so far as he is the metaphysical cause of all that we see in the empirical world (योनिः सर्वस्य) as the Śruti says. But in himself, when his being the potential seed of the world is not taken into account, this very same *Prajña* is *Turiya*, the Absolute Reality, altogether free from the body, and other conditioning associates : ताम् अबीजावस्थां तस्यैव प्राज्ञशब्दवाच्यस्य तुरीयत्वेन देहादि संबन्धरहितां पारमार्थिकीं पृथग् वक्ष्यति ॥ (Gk. Bh. 1-2). The author himself appeals to this interpretation of *Turiya* offered by Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara in a footnote (on p. 169).

A third point to be considered in this connection is with reference to the relation of Pure Consciousness (P.C.) to the phenomenal world. The author repeatedly says that the world is no creation or emanation from God, but His manifestation. Is this faithful to Upaniṣads and to Śaṅkara ? Creation in the sense of bringing something into existence out of nothing is of course repugnant to the spirit of Upaniṣads. 'How could being be born out of nothing ?' (Ch.6-2-2). Emanation or issuing forth from the source is precluded by the assertion of Upaniṣads that all the universe is even now verily Brahman (Mu. 2-2-11). Manifestation or self-expression, on the other hand, is expressly backed by the Śruti (सोऽकामयत बहु स्याम्) "He desired - may I become many" (Tai. 2-6). And Śaṅkara explains that 'Name and form manifest themselves without losing their essential nature as Ātman' (आत्मस्वरूपा-परित्यागेनैव व्यक्रियेते). And the author also writes, in consonance with this, "Your difficulties arise from divorcing the manifestation from the Reality underlying it. The world is not some-

thing separate from P.C.” “It (P.C.) bears both the aspects at the same time and while remaining changeless, becomes the world marked by unceasing change and the ego that perceives it.” Again, “Brahman as the Absolute is free from all relations and it is only with reference to its manifestation it has to be assumed as the cause. While it accompanies all life without undergoing any change, there is also side by side with it an empirical life ruled by time, space and causality, and which again in sleep it dissolves into itself”.

I shall now mention a point or two on which Sri Iyer's exegesis does not appear to me to keep pace with that of Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda. In the first place he has not, to my mind, laid sufficient stress on the significance of the negations employed in the *Mantra* (Mā. 7) revealing the nature of *Turiyā* or the Absolute. Why does the Śruti use a string of negatives to point out *Turiyā* ? Why does it not specifically describe Reality directly ? Do these denials add anything - say, the opposite of what is denied - to the nature of *Turiyā* ? Or do they affirm the real existence of the attributes denied somewhere else than *Turiyā* ? Or do they at least denote the absolute absence of the attributes denied in *Turiyā* ? These questions which the empirical view might suggest are neither answered in the affirmative nor negated by the author. True, he has emphatically declared that the Absolute is beyond all speech and thought, and that it is a 'negation of all marks' by which an empirical object may be identified, but the function of negations in connection with the Absolute seems to be nowhere directly discussed in this work. Besides, the author's remarks, on the famous *Gauḍapāda Kārika* (1-16) where the secondless Reality

is described as 'Unborn, unsleeping and undreaming', are even liable to be misinterpreted by the unwary student of Vedānta. "Even while we describe it (Pure Consciousness) in this negative manner", says the author, "we do objectify it, and do injustice to its real nature". A reader of average intelligence not initiated into the traditional way of understanding Upaniṣadic teaching, is apt to suppose that this statement implies that there is possibly an affirmative description of *Turiya* as contrasted with a negative one. With due respect to a thinker, contact with whom has helped me in no small measure to understand the rational cast of Upaniṣadic teaching, I have to say that this interpretation of Vedāntic negation is not quite correct ; no negation objectifies *Turiya* or *Reality*, not only because the latter is by nature not objectifiable, but also because the function of Śāstraic teaching has nothing to do with the Secondless Ātman. As Śaṅkara remarks, (द्वैताभावे शास्त्रव्यापारः, नाद्वैते विरोधात् ।) "The function of the Śruti is to remove duality and not to affirm something about non-duality, for that would be a contradiction in terms" (GK Bh. 2-32). The fact is that negation of the superimposed is the only way to direct the attention of the seekers towards *Turiya*. *Turiya* is the self-evident, inmost Self, and no description, definition or proof of its existence is needed. Being self-effulgent it demands no knowledge to throw light upon it and to make it known, nor is it possible to objectify it by any knowledge either. To know it, is only to intuit it. Its very nature therefore, desiderates the removal of the intercepting superimpositions on it, to wipe out the constructs of *Avidyā* and nothing more for making it known.

Śaṅkara makes this point quite clear when he says that the Śruti employs this device of negation exclusively because (1) *Turiya* has no specific features which could be described by words (सर्वशब्दप्रवृत्तिनिमित्तशून्यत्वात् तस्य शब्दानभिधेयत्वम् इति ।) and because (2) the Śruti proposes to remove the super-imposition of the states which are the constructs of *Avidyā* and to emphasize the fact that the very Ātman in the three states is *Turiya* who is really free from the states. This is similar to the method of removing the false imaginations like the rope-snake with a view to intimating the true nature of the rope. (सर्पाद्विकल्पप्रतिषेधेनैव रज्जुस्वरूपप्रतिपत्तिवत्, त्रयवस्थास्यैवात्मनः तुरीयत्वेन प्रतिपिपादायिषितत्वात् ।) That the negations are simple negations and by no means descriptions of *Turiya* himself, is further made clear by Śaṅkara when he draws our attention to the psychological fact that simultaneously with the dispersal of the false ascriptions such as inward consciousness (dreaming) with regard to the nature of *Turiya*, the seeker himself ceases to be an enquirer of truth, and all distinction of the knower, knowledge and the knowable vanishes (अन्तःप्रज्ञत्वादिनिवृत्तिसमकालमेव प्रमातृत्वादिभेदनिवृत्तेः ।).

It is not, however, by the sheer force of scriptural authority that these negations determine the illusory nature of the states and the experiences incidental to these states. They are ascertained to be unreal because experience of each state absolutely cancels the existence of the other two. Each of them is real in its own place and degree, as Bradley would say, but no one state or its consciousness can lay claim to a higher degree of reality any more than the rope-snake, or the streak of water or

any other imagined appearance can claim the reality of its substrate, the real rope. Ātman as Pure Consciousness, however, persists throughout amidst their appearance and disappearance and is therefore, the only Real (ज्ञस्वरूपाविशेषेऽपि इतरेतरव्यभिचारादसत्यत्वं रज्ज्वादाविव सर्पधारादिविकल्पित भेदवत् । सर्वत्राव्यभिचारात् ज्ञस्वरूपस्य सत्यत्वम् ।).

In the light of the conclusions we have arrived at in connection with *Turiya* - the fourth or the real nature of Brahman as our Self - the author's treatment of the syllable *Aum* seems to need some slight amendment likewise. For, while his categorical statement that *Aum* is 'a symbol' of Reality intended for 'meditation' is quite justifiable in the context of the Upāsana section of Upaniṣads, as is the case for instance in the Praśna, chapter V, where it is expressly enjoined that it should be meditated upon -(ओंकारम् अभिध्यायीत), the same cannot be supposed to apply to Vedāntic texts where *Aum* is declared to be Reality itself free from all marks characterizing a symbol. *Aum* is here no more a symbol than *Turiya* himself is one. In fact the Upaniṣad in its last *Mantra* emphasizes the absolute identity of *Aum* with Ātman. Compare this description of *Aum* with that of *Turiya* (नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतः प्रज्ञं) and that we have already discussed. It is an exact counterpart of the latter in that it uses negations alone to acquaint us with the nature of *Aum*. This *Aum* is without the elements (A, U and M अमात्रः) ; it is no objective phenomenon and so beyond empirical treatment since it is beyond all speech and thought (अव्यवहार्यः) ; all multiplicity of words denot-

ing waking and dream phenomenon are absent there (प्रपञ्चोपशमम्) in the same way as *Turiyā* is above all the plurality of states. In fact this *Aum* is really Ātman and nothing else (एवम् ओंकार आत्मैव). Can this be a description of a 'syllable for meditation ?'

Why does the Upaniṣad call Reality by two names *Aum* and Brahman ? Is it not a wasteful repetition ? Śāṅkara's reply to this is as follows : What was first described from the standpoint of the named, has been again described from the standpoint of the name, to tell us that both the name and the named are essentially identical (अभिधान प्राधान्येन निर्दिष्टस्य पुनरभिधेयप्राधान्येन निर्देशः, अभिधानाभिधेययोरेकत्वप्रतिपत्त्यर्थः ।). And this teaching of identity is for the purpose of leading the seeker to the intuition of that Brahman which is beyond both by the simultaneous merging of both the name and the named (एकत्वप्रतिपत्तेश्च प्रयोजनम् अभिधानाभिधेययोरेकेनैव प्रयत्नेन युगपत् प्रविलापयन् तद्विलक्षणं ब्रह्म प्रतिपद्येत इति ।). It must be now clear how the Method of Avasthās is really a sub-variety of the *Adhyārōpa-Apavāda* method. For, here as elsewhere, the presumption in the beginning that Ātman really passes from state to state is only a device used for determining the true nature of the self as *Turiyā* who is absolutely free from the taint of *Avasthas*. When the Śruti uses the negation-method and declares that secondless Ātman or *Turiyā* is neither inwardly conscious nor outwardly conscious, it does not imply that the dreaming self or the waking self is distinct from the former. It only intends to point out that all these seeming selves are essentially identical with the *Turiyā*.

Indeed, our author himself is vividly conscious of this truth when he writes, "This trinity (of *Avasthās*) is one in fact. Waking cannot be separated from the Pure Consciousness commonly looked upon as sleep, nor dream. All these are essentially one, ever one and identical".

I had a mind to discuss two more points in this connection - the method of the five sheaths (*Pañcakōśas*) as interpreted in the chapter (XV) on Solipsism, and the theory of *Māyā* as presented in this work (in chapter XIII and elsewhere). I wanted to show how, with a slight amendment, the *Pañcakōśa* Method could have been brought in line with Śaṅkara's procedure with regard to the *Avasthaic* method, and also how Sri Iyer's treatment of *Māyā* was rather a blend of Śaṅkara's and post-Śaṅkaras' views such as we find in the *Pañcadaśi*. But these 'Introductory Remarks' have already occupied a larger space than allowable. What little I have written is, I hope, sufficient to indicate that I regard the present work as the only one yet written so exhaustively on the subject of *Avasthās*. It is really a pity that it has been allowed to remain out of print for so long a time.

PART - II

I. THE KENA UPANIṢAD

(Prefatory remarks)

The Teaching of The Upaniṣad

Kena is the second of the series of smaller Upaniṣads which I have edited with notes for publication by the Ādhyātma Prakāsha Kāryālaya. Its importance lies in the fact that it directly invites our attention to the Vedāntic doctrine of the Universal Witnessing Principle which is the one real Self of us all.

The Upaniṣad tells us that, while this Self or Brahman can never be perceived by the senses or represented by the intellect, it can nevertheless be intuited as our immediate essence quite other than all that is known or unknown to us. Brahman readily lends Itself to be made an object of meditation by Its devotees, but this circumstance should not justify any one to consider It as really an object of sense or intellect. It is rather that metaphysical presence which quickens and enkindles all our instruments of knowledge so as to enable them to throw any light upon their objects. If we could but attend to It introspectively, we could intuit It as the eternal Witnessing Effulgence, each time we are aware of any external object. This knowledge, the Upaniṣad claims, enables the aspirant to realise himself as identical with that Brahman, his own inalienable and eternal immortality.

Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya and the Gloss thereon

Unlike the other Upaniṣads, Kena has two commentaries both ascribed to the famous Sri Śaṅkarācārya. For reasons stated in the Saṃskṛta Introduction, I have come to the conclusion that the so-called Vākya Bhāṣya, cannot have been from the pen of the same author that wrote the other commentary. How far my argument is admissible, I leave the critical reader to judge.

The glossator on Bhāṣyas has been generally identified with Ānandagiri that has explained Śaṅkara's Bhāṣyas on the other classical Upaniṣads as well as on Sūtra Bhāṣya. I have stated my reasons as to why I demur to this acquiescence also. In any case, this glossator has not, to my mind, done full justice to many a passage in Bhāṣya. I have therefore ventured to offer these notes of my own, explaining at fuller length, many points that would otherwise remain obscure. Students who use the notes should be able to see how far I have been successful in this attempt.

II. KĀṬHAKA UPANIṢAD

(Introduction)

The Place of the Upaniṣad

The Kaṭha Upaniṣad has to be inferred as belonging to the Kāṭhaka recension of the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, merely on the strength of the title it bears. For we do not find any followers of that branch, who are actually reciting it nowadays. The relation of the Upaniṣad to the other

portions of that recension of the Veda, has not been indicated by any commentator on the Upaniṣad. Śaṅkara, in particular, affords no clue whatever either in his Introduction or in the body of his Bhāṣya, which may lead one to determine the place of the Upaniṣad. The incomplete nature of the published portion of the Kāthaka portion, adds to our difficulty, for while the Samhita of the recension has been printed both in Germany and in our own country, its Brāhmaṇa portion has not yet been accessible to scholars.

It is a source of some solace, therefore, to find that a portion of the Upaniṣad, the dialogue between Yama and Naciketas, has its counter-part in the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa, and a sort of redaction in the Mahābhārata. The story as found in the latter, has been given in detail in the Samskrta Introduction. It will be seen that the narrative there, has little or nothing in common with the Upaniṣad. The incident of Naciketas being cursed by his wrathful father to see Yama, is not in connection with a sacrifice. Yama sends him back to life after showing him the various heavenly worlds which righteous men attain, especially the Lōka which the gift of cows ensures. The version in the Taittiriya bears more points of resemblance. The third boon granted by Yama, however, the knowledge of the Highest Brahman transcending the sphere of all religious works, is conspicuous by its absence there. The relevant portion with Sāyaṇa's Bhāṣya, has been appended to the present edition of the Upaniṣad for the convenience of the reader.

What has become of the Kāthaka Brāhmaṇa, is yet wrapped up in mystery. Patañjali, in his great commen-

tary on Pāṇini (4-3-101), remarks that 'The Kāṭhaka and the Kalapāka are being recited in every village.' And yet the Brāhmaṇa of that widely studied Veda, has been fated to be thrown into the limbo of oblivion ! A portion of the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, the third Aṣṭaka, contains a portion - from the tenth Praśna onwards - which the present day traditional reciters style 'the Kāṭhaka.' It is note-worthy that the first two Aṣṭakas of the Brāhmaṇa contain only eight Praśnas, whereas the third alone comprises twelve, thus rendering its title Aṣṭaka (octad) a misnomer. Can it be, that, as the Kāṭhaka fell into more and more disuse, the followers of the Taittirīya appropriated this portion of it, out of affection for a version of their own Śākha ?

The Teaching of the Upaniṣad

In his Introduction to the Bhāṣya, Śaṅkara calls both the Agni-vidyā (knowledge of Virāṭ or Lower Brahman) and the knowledge of Brahman transcending all religious works, by the name of 'Upaniṣad'. It is obvious, however, by his introductory observations on the twentieth Mantra of the first Valli, that he regards the knowledge of the Higher Brahman as pre-eminently 'The Upaniṣad'. The innate ignorance of the nature of superimposition of the notions of action, instruments of action, and the fruits of action', he says, 'has got to be destroyed by the knowledge of the identity of Brahman and Ātman to be treated of in the sequel' (23)¹.

1. Single figures thus enclosed in brackets refer to the number of the paragraph in the Bhāṣya.

The Special Features of the Bhāṣya

The Doctrine of Conjunction of Rites And Knowledge Not Discussed

Śaṅkara has not entered here into a lengthy discussion of the demerits of the doctrine of the conjunction of rites and knowledge as a means to liberation, for the obvious reason that the doctrine is ruled out by the very nature of the third question propounded by Naciketas. He requests Yama to enlighten him as to the nature of Reality which is beyond all religious works, and Yama's answer to it forms the main theme of this Upaniṣad.

Avidyā and Māyā

In an important passage (1-1-20) which we have already referred to, Śaṅkara describes Avidyā as the seed of Samsāra of transmigration (स्वाभाविकस्याज्ञानस्य संसारबीजस्य) ; and in commenting on the expression महतः परमव्यक्तम् (1-3-11) 'the Avyakta is greater than the Mahat' , he describes Avyakta also as the 'seed' of the world (अव्यक्तं सर्वस्य जगतो बीजभूतम् , अव्याकृतनामरूपसतत्त्वम्) ; while in explaining गूढोऽऽत्मा न प्रकाशते (1-3-12) 'this hidden Ātman does not shine forth', he says that Ātman is 'enveloped in Avidyā Māyā' (गूढः संवृतः दर्शनश्रवणादिकर्मा अविद्यामायाच्छन्नः). Putting these statements together, some have drawn the corollary that Avidyā and Māyā are perfectly indetical, and hence it is wrong to make any distinction between them in Śaṅkara's Vedānta.

A close examination of the Sūtra-Bhāṣya, however, reveals that Avidyā is false-knowledge ('तमेतमेवंलक्षणमध्यासं

पण्डिता अविद्येति मन्यन्ते', 'अध्यासो नामातस्मिस्तद्बुद्धिरित्यबोचाम', 'मिथ्याप्रत्ययरूपः' Int. S. B.), whereas Māyā is something objective, falsely imagined by Avidyā to exist (अविद्याकल्पिते नामरूपे ईश्वरस्य माया, शक्तिः, प्रकृतिः S. B. 2-1-14). In his commentation of the Sūtra devoted to the elucidation of the connotation of the term Avyakta (S. B. 1-4-3), Śaṅkara gives two alternative interpretations, one treating it as the objective Māyā and the other as the subjective Avidyā or ignorance, thus disclosing that he does not identify the two concepts. Hence I have explained the passage treating of स्वाभाविकाज्ञान (1-1-20) as meaning that the innate ignorance of man, is responsible for all the evils of mundane life, while the passage on Avyakta (1-3-11), I have interpreted to describe the seed or material cause of the world (सर्वस्य जगतो बीजमव्याकृतसत्त्वम्) in conformity with the Bṛhadāraṇyaka (1-4-7) and the Sūtra-Bhāṣya (2-1-14) already cited. Amarakōśa, the dictionary of Samskr̥ta synonyms, (हेतुर्ना कारणं बीजम्) is favourable to either interpretation and so, the context alone can justify the meaning we choose. Again the Bhāṣya (1-3-12) which describes Ātman as enveloped in Avidyā-Māyā, I have taken to mean that the Self, appears, as the individual soul, to be enveloped by the conditioning adjuncts such as the organs of sight or hearing which, in reality, are the products of Māyā, the figment of Avidyā. The critical reader alone can judge as to which of the two views - the one identifying Avidyā and Māyā, and the other, distinguishing them as subjective and objective - appeals to him as being consistent with the spirit of Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya.

Āgama and Tarka

There are two words which, just like Avidyā and Māyā, are liable to be misunderstood. Some have taken 'Āgama' invariably to mean Śruti or Revelation, and they believe that Śruti is to be entirely relied upon as the only means of acquiring Vedāntic knowledge while 'Tarka' or reason is to be altogether eschewed in the case of Brahman, since the Śruti expressly declares that the knowledge of Brahman cannot be attained through ratiocination. But this view does not seem to fit in with the spirit of Śaṅkara's commentary, since we find in the Bhāṣya as well as in the Upaniṣad itself, a good deal of reasoning employed. Śaṅkara's actual position in this matter can be gathered from his comment on the verse नैषा तर्केण (1-2-9). "This knowledge of Ātman is not to be attained through ratiocination or mere reasoning based upon one's own guessing ; nor can it be sublated by that reasoning" (नैषा तर्केण स्वबुद्ध्याभ्यूहमात्रेण आपनेया न प्रापणीया इत्यर्थः । न अपनेतव्या वा न हातव्या). "A mere speculator without the aid of Āgama (तार्किको हि अनागमज्ञः), avers whatever his own intellect has devised. Hence this knowledge is to be got only through some one else than the dialectician, through an Ācārya conversant with Āgama". (37)

The 'Āgama' here referred to, is the traditional method of teaching, which consists in the annulment, by reasoning, of the alien properties superimposed upon the Self by Avidyā, or innate ignorance. For this purpose, the line of reasoning suggested by the Śruti is to be preferred to dry ratiocination, since the former is based upon universal experience. Examples of such Vedic reasoning,

have been extracted from the body of the Upaniṣad, (1-3-10, 11, 12, ; 2-1-3 ; 2-1-4 ; 2-2-1) and adduced in the Samskr̥ta Introduction. It will be readily seen that these are no mere syllogisms of the logician, but rather helps to the seeker in rendering Upaniṣadic teaching more and more intelligible by dissociating it from super-imposed elements.

Yōga and Jñāna

In this Upaniṣad is to be found a certain Yōga taught once in the body of the work (अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन धीरो 1-2-12), and again at the conclusion (विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च 2-3-18) as necessary for the knowledge of Ātman. Now, what is the place of this Yōga in Śaṅkara's system ? There is a belief in certain quarters that Ātman cannot be known fully through attending to Vedic teaching alone, unless one attains direct realization (साक्षात्कार) through the practice of Yōga. I have examined this view at some length in the Samskr̥ta Introduction and conclusively shown that, according to Śaṅkara, the doctrine of the so-called realization after knowledge, is untenable, inasmuch as Ātman is for ever self-revealed, and never remote or obscured by anything other than ignorance. I have also drawn attention to the fact that Śaṅkara teaches that a few gifted souls can and do realize their identity with Brahman through Upaniṣadic teaching alone (सकृदुक्तमेव S. B. 4-1-2), while for the rest of the aspirants who are not sufficiently introvert, the Ādhyātma Yōga or the art of withdrawing the senses and staying the mind on the Self, may be necessary before intuiting the real Ātman.

Liberation

With regard to final liberation from all bondage, the prevalent notion is that liberation in the present life is only secondary since there remains a residue of Avidyā until the mortal coil is shuffled off. The Samskr̥ta Introduction shows the untenability of this view also. Śaṅkara, no doubt, admits a gradual liberation in the case of the devotees of the Lower Brahman (109), but for those whose ignorance, desires and Karma are altogether destroyed simultaneously with the dawn of knowledge, Jīvanmukti or liberation while yet living (इहैव) is an undeniable fact (80). Videha-Mukti or liberation after disembodiment is only figuratively called liberation, merely because the enlightened souls no more take on a fresh body (पुनः शरीरं न गृह्णातीत्यर्थः ।).

Conclusion

Śaṅkara's system is thus seen to be quite dissimilar to any other Darśana in that (1) unlike the Karma-Mīmāṃsakas and other Vedāntins who rely on the authority of the Vedas, he holds that Śruti is a Pramāṇa not merely on the score of its being the Veda, but because it leads to immediate experience of the truth it teaches ; (2) unlike the Buddhistic Nihilists who declare the whole universe to be essenceless (निःस्वभाव), he maintains that there is one Reality which serves as the ground of all else which is super-imposed upon it ; (3) unlike the Sāṅkhyas and others who rely on cold ratiocination alone as the primary source of knowledge of the ultimate cause of the world, he appeals to the Vedic line of reasoning which rests upon verifiable experience at every step ; and (4)

unlike the followers of Patañjali and others who teach the practice of Yōga as the *sine qua non* for attaining and resting in the true nature of the individual self, he makes use of the Ādhyātma Yōga only as a means to turn the mind inward by dissolving all unreal elements into the only Self which is the ground of all apparent phenomena.

The Notes on the Upaniṣad

This small Upaniṣad contains many a gem of spiritual teaching which Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya has brought to light. I have, therefore, edited it with the same care that has been taken with regard to the Kena and the Muṇḍaka.

For my notes on this Upaniṣad, as elsewhere, I have depended upon Śaṅkara himself rather than the glossators. Neither Ānandagiri nor Bālagōpālendra-Yatindra can be trusted as safe guides throughout, since they are both very recent writers as shown in the Saṃskṛta Introduction.

III. THE MUṆḌAKA UPANIṢAD

(Prefaratory Remarks)

The Teaching of the Upaniṣad

This is the third of the series of smaller Upaniṣads edited by me for publication by the Ādhyātma Prakāśha Kāryālaya.

The special features embodied in its teaching are (1) The dismissal of Karma and Upāsana after a brief notice as belonging to 'the lower doctrine' (अपरा विद्या) not conducive to immediate release ; (2) The tracing of the entire

universe to its original source, the Indestructible (अक्षरम्) as the First Causeless Cause of all, and hence concluding that the only reality underlying all phenomena, is that eternal Brahman, really free from all attributes ; (3) giving important directions, moral as well as spiritual, to such aspirants as desire to intuit that Reality ; and finally, (4) showing how this Higher Wisdom enables one to realize one's eternal identity with Brahman in this very life.

Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya and the Gloss thereon

Śaṅkara has, in his inimitable style, shown how this teaching is essentially in consonance with that of all other main Upaniṣads. I have attempted to amplify his views in my Notes by references to other Bhāṣyas of that great teacher, in order to strengthen the conviction of the student as to the uniformity of all Vedāntic Revelation.

The Glossator on the Bhāṣya, generally known as Ānandagiri, must be distinguished from his namesake who has explained the Brhadāranyaka or the Sūtra Bhāṣya ; for he believes in the doctrine of many souls (नानाजीववादः, vide Gloss on Bhāṣya 1-2-1 of the Upaniṣad) while the other Ānandagiri upholds the doctrine of a Single Individual Soul. Being a recent writer on Vedānta, he has naturally read many a tenet from the later schools of sub-commentaries into the Bhāṣya, which circumstance has rendered many passages un-intelligible to students of Śaṅkara. It is hoped that the Notes now offered will throw some light upon such intricate parts of the Bhāṣya.

IV. THE TAITTIRĪYA UPAṆIṢAD, ŚĪKṢĀVALLĪ (Introduction)

The Importance of the Upaniṣad

The Taittirīya occupies an important position among the Upaniṣads on which Sri Śaṅkarācārya has chosen to write his famous commentaries, technically called Bhāṣyas in Saṃskṛta. While it is of medium size in extent, it contains all the important doctrines of Vedānta more succinctly, and perhaps, more systematically set forth than in any other Upaniṣad of similar or smaller size. It is also one of the very few Upaniṣads whose relation with the antecedent and subsequent portions of the recension of the particular Veda to which they pertain, can be determined without difficulty, so that the development of Vedic thought, can be traced from the Samhita down to the Upaniṣad. Moreover it has a living interest for the numerous followers of the Taittirīya Recension¹ of Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, as they can still find pious Brāhmins in South India, reciting it with proper accent and intonation.

The Teaching of the Upaniṣad

The central aim of the Upaniṣad, is to explain how every qualified student can, by the method of discriminating the five Kōśas or sheaths enveloping Ātman, re-

1. This recension is so named most probably because Tittiri was the first Ṛṣi to present it in its traditional form. The Puraṇas, however have a different story to tell in this connection. When sage Yājñavalkya vomitted out the Yajurveda at the bidding of his wrathful teacher, we are told, certain pious Ṛṣis anxious to secure text, assumed the form of Tittiri birds and sucked it up. Hence the name.

alize Brahman or Reality underlying all phenomena, as his very self. As the revelation of this method, is covered by the next two chapters, to be expatiated on by the present writer in an elaborate commentary on the Bhāṣya, the first chapter alone, generally known as the Śikṣāvallī, is being separately presented now to the reader, as containing preparatory discipline necessary for a genuine aspirant wishing to enter upon that study.

Special features of Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya

1. As explained in the Bhāṣya, the three chapters of this Upaniṣad form one whole containing the doctrine of Brahmanvidyā, which by dispelling Avidyā or Nescience of the true nature of Ātman, enables an aspirant to realize and rest for ever in his own Self. On account of the numerous Upāsanas or Meditations taught in the first chapter, however, one is apt to lose sight of this main theme, and jump to the conclusion that the Upaniṣad solely treats of Meditation on Brahman, which is to fructify in the attainment of Brahman only after the practitioner has shuffled off this mortal coil of a body. Many Bhāṣyakāras, antecedent and subsequent to Śaṅkara, have actually taken up this position, and have argued that the frequent reference to Karma or ritual, is in their favour since meditation and not Jñāna as advocated by Śaṅkara, is compatible with the practice of Karma. And some followers of the Mīmāṃsa, have gone to the length of maintaining that Karma alone as taught in the previous Kāṇḍa of the Vedas, conduces to final liberation, the portion treating Brahma-vidyā being, in their opinion, Arthavāda or merely eulogistic statement to be explained somehow as being subservient to Karma.

Śaṅkara has, in his Introduction and Supplement to his Bhāṣya on the Śikṣāvallī, considered all possible alternative interpretations of the Vedic Teaching with regard to the means to Mōkṣa, and after a careful and thorough sifting of the various evidences, arrives at the irresistible conclusion that, Vidyā or knowledge of Brahman as he conceives is the sole means to final liberation, since all bondage is due to the ignorance of the true nature of the Self as Brahman. As the beginner is likely to miss the train of thought in the Bhāṣya owing to certain repetitions and the double meaning assigned to the term Vidyā, I have tried to restate the chief points of the argument in the Samskr̥ta Introduction. It is hoped that the usefulness of this analysis of the Bhāṣya will be appreciated by the critical student.

2. In the course of the aforesaid argument, Śaṅkara has pointed out a forcible position that nothing produced by effort can be eternal, and hence Mōkṣa being eternal, cannot be the effect of either Karma, or Upāṣana or both combined. At this stage the opponent urges that even what is produced might well be permanent on the strength of a Vedic statement to that effect. Śaṅkara now brings forward the clinching argument (Para. 62) that *a Vedic Text is only a revealer of an existent fact and not a creator of something that is not already there*. Indeed, not even a hundred texts can produce something eternal, nor make anything produced imperishable. Here is a principle of exegesis unrecognised by any other Vedāntic school. Even Post-Śaṅkara Vedāntins of the Advaitic School appear to ignore this fundamental axiom when they appeal to

Śruti as the highest tribunal on certain controverted postulates in the face of reason based on universal experience.

3. Another important piece of argument in the Bhāṣya, though not of much interest to the lay reader, is seen in the exposure of the material fallacy of the scholastic, whose fantasy raises even non-existence to the rank of a positive entity, and attributes quality, number and causal relation to that figment. In the present Bhāṣya, the Karma Mīmāṃsaka takes shelter under this fallacy when he argues (Para. 8) that Mōkṣa can well be a negative like the Pradhvaṃsa-Abhava or non-existence after destruction, and yet be produced like it. Śaṅkara shatters this logic-chopping by pointing out that it is only a construction of imagination to believe that non-existence is produced since non-existence does not allow, like a positive entity, of any attribute or act being ascribed to it and hence is devoid of all distinctions - such as previous non-existence, mutual non-existence or non-existence after destruction. For if it were to have attributes, it would be a positive entity and no longer non-existence.

4. There are a few more features of the Bhāṣya to which full justice cannot be done before the study of the Upaniṣad as a whole is completed. They have therefore been held over for consideration in the Introduction to the Bhāṣya on Ānandāvallī and Bhṛguvalli.

Sources for Notes

In the preparation of my Notes on the Bhāṣya, I have of course frequently consulted Ānandagiri's Gloss,

Sureśvara's Vārtikas and Sāyaṇā's Bhāṣya as being the only authoritative writings available on the subject. I have depended, however, more on Śaṅkara's own statements in his other Bhāṣyas, whenever these sources seemed to be in conflict with one another, or what is more serious, with Śaṅkara himself. Ānandagiri commonly but erroneously believed to be the direct disciple of Śaṅkara, is, as has been shown in the Samskr̥ta Introduction, a very recent writer since he expressly refers to works like Tattvālōka and Prakatārtha. He mixes up Post-Śaṅkarite doctrines with genuine Śaṅkara teachings so much so, that I have had to guard the student against some of his opinions unsupported or even rejected by the Bhāṣya. Sureśvara is very brief in his Vārtika and seems to merely summarize the Bhāṣya on the Śīkṣāvallī. Sāyaṇa, on the other hand, is so elaborate that the ordinary student scarcely sees the wood for the trees, and derives very little help in understanding some of Śaṅkara's terse and pithy statements. In these circumstances, I have tried to clarify most of the difficult points in the Bhāṣya solely on the strength of the parallel passages elsewhere in Śaṅkara's other Bhāṣyas. This accounts for the numerous citations from his other works interspersed throughout the Notes. How far I have succeeded in this attempt, the critical reader alone is to judge. For myself, I regard this editing work more as a piece of service and devotion to the holy feet of that revered Teacher.

V. THE TAITTIRĪYA UPANIṢAD ĀNANDAVALLĪ - BHRĠGUVALLĪ

(Introduction)

General observations on the scope and tenor of the Upaniṣad, will be found in the Introduction to Śikṣāvallī. We shall now enter upon the central theme of Upaniṣad as taught in Ānandavallī and Bhṛguvallī, which together form a composite whole.

The Relation between the Two Parts of the Upaniṣad

From Śaṅkara's introductory remarks on Śikṣā (pp. 2, 3) as well as Ānandavallī (para 3, p.7), we learn that while Brahmanidyā is actually begun in Śikṣāvallī alone, it is still merely Upāsana (meditation) of the conditioned Brahman that is attempted there. That teaching necessarily presumes the distinction of Brahman and the devotee, who is to reach Brahman only after shuffling off this mortal coil. Now, all this is within the sphere of Avidyā (ignorance) of the Pure Brahman, and therefore, the Highest Goal is not attained until one realises his absolute identity with Brahman after annihilating this nescience. It is only on this supposition that one can understand why, on exhausting all meditations whether exclusive of or conjoint with Karma, a distinct section like Ānandavallī devoted solely to the pure knowledge of Brahman, becomes necessary.

Subject-matter of this portion

We may now enter into details of the Upaniṣadic teaching as presented here. Brahman, is Reality, Con-

sciousness, Infinity (9) and Bliss (97)¹. Whoever realises It as one's own Self, has no cause of fear at all, since he abides for ever in that secondless Brahman (67) beyond the pale of fear. And Tapas (contracting of all the organs of knowledge) is the one indispensable means to this knowledge (94).

There are a few Upāśanas enjoined in both Ānanda-vallī and Bhṛguvallī, but they are meant only for mediocre aspirants. The main trend of the teaching, however, is unbroken even, while these Upāśanas are interposed inasmuch as they serve a useful purpose in pointing out the media of realization, or else in glorifying the knower of Brahman in order to eulogize the knowledge of Brahman, as explained at some length in the present commentary (93. pp. 3, 9, 342, 345).

Brahman as the Cause

There are three methods of approach adopted here to lead the aspirant to the intuition of Brahman. All of these may be comprehended under one heading - Adhyā-rōpa-Apavāda (the method of deliberate imputation and subsequent negation). This method consists in attributing certain characteristics to the featureless Brahman in order to fix the attention of the student on it, and then passing on to a higher point of view from which the assumed characteristic becomes sublated. The attribution itself, is a concession to the empirical intellect, to enable it, to rise to the higher standpoint later on.

The *Modus operandi* of the method, may be illustrated by applying it to the notion of causality. The time-

1. The references are to the paragraphs unless otherwise mentioned.

bound human intellect is inherently used to the notion of causality so much, that it demands a cause for the entire universe, naively forgetting that this relation, if at all, can obtain within the universe, only between phenomena in time or place. The Upaniṣad, therefore, starts from a definition of Brahman as Reality, Consciousness and Infinity and declares outright, that even Ākāśa (ether, the primary element concomitant with time), is produced from Brahman. All creation, or rather evolution, is only a manifestation of Brahman, Paramātmān, or God as the true Self of all, Who wills to become many, to become this manifold world. He Himself enters into the aggregate of the body and senses as Jīva - the supporter of senses - and transforms Himself into all that we see - gross and subtle, sentient and non-sentient, real and unreal. Now, this is only for the purpose of pointing out that there can be nothing apart from Brahman, the effect being only the cause in another form. We thus arrive at the conclusion that Brahman is the only Reality, the only Consciousness, and is Infinity itself. Hence, there is no second to limit It. For all limitation is due to space, or time, or a second thing beside the one which it limits. But everything including time and space is produced from Brahman, is in fact an appearance super-imposed upon It, and, nothing, which is merely a construction of the mind, can possibly limit or otherwise affect its real substrate. And the individual soul being no other than Brahman Itself, is only a seeming distinct on account of the superimposed adjunct, the mind (8-11, 50- 64). According to Śaṅkara, then, the Śruti apparently teaching creation, only purports to convince the inquirer of his identity with the non-dual Brahman which brooks no second.

The Method of Five Sheaths

Again, the Śruti in the course of describing the evolution of Brahman into the universe, states that from the earth came plants, and from plants food, whence this human being. As related above, Brahman has Itself entered this human body and manifests Itself as Jīva with his various specific properties such as seeing, hearing, thinking and understanding. Now man generally looks upon himself as a body, though he is daily aware of the vital force, mind, and understanding also as a part of himself. The Śruti therefore, starts from this false Ātman (or body) as the most familiar man and takes the enquirer to the real Ātman or Brahman, step by step, through Prāṇamaya, Manōmaya and Vijñānamaya selves, each subtler than the previous one, each pervading all the previous Kōśas or sheaths, and hence more entitled to be considered as one's own self. In each case, however, the Śruti also broadens his ordinary outlook. Thus it identifies the Annamaya with the Cosmic Virāt, the Prāṇamaya with the Cosmic Sūtrātma, and the Manōmaya with Hiranyagarbha as Vedātma, while it identifies the Vijñānamaya with Hiranyagarbha, the cosmic Buddhyātma, till at last even the Ānandamaya or enjoying self is transcended and Brahman as the real self of all is realised as such (24, 25-44, 45).

Here too, the Śruti does not mean to aver that there are actually five different Kōśas like scabbards covering a sword - each literally enclosed within the next one. All Kōśas are really super-impositions of Avidyā, the only Reality being Brahman. Only each successive Kōśa being subtler than the preceding one, claims to be more entitled

to be regarded as the real Self, as the enquirer looks deeper and deeper.

Proofs for the Existence of Brahman

Brahman described as 'the tail and support of Ānandamaya' being divested of all conditions, and having no characterizing features whatever, is likely to be considered as altogether nonexistent. Man is so habituated to look upon his body, senses or mind as his own real Self, that he might be inclined to think that after all Brahman which the Śruti postulates as the real Self of all, might be no more than an abstraction, since nothing whatever remains as a residue after the elimination of the physiological, psychical, intellectual and ethical constituents of the human being. The Śruti, therefore, offers some proofs, or rather persuasive suggestions, to lead him to the intuition of the Real Self. The fact that the world demands a cause or reality underlying it, that there is an individual self inclosed within each mind which an introvert person recognizes as his true Self, that the phenomena of real and apparent names and forms as well as of sentient and insentient beings, desiderate some real basis, that virtue is universally believed to be ultimately rewarded, that all beings strive with the fervent hope of attaining worldly pleasure and with a firm belief in a fountainhead of joy and the fact that some highly developed souls are seen to be altogether free from fear while the rest are invariably inspired with fear, one should conclude that there is Brahman or Reality which alone could satisfactorily account for these data of experience (51, 56, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66).

While these are by no means proofs in the logical sense of the term, they do arrest our attention and direct us towards Brahman which is our true Self. It is clear that we can neither prove nor disprove the existence of our own Self, since it is the very basis of thought which we utilise for proving or disproving anything, and no body can shake off his own Self, try as we may. And the secondless Brahman as our Self, says the Śruti, is imperceptible, formless, undefinable, not requiring another support, and as such, one who abides in It, is surely established in absolute fearlessness (67).

Trail of Brahmānanda

Ānandavallī is appropriately so named on account of its revealing the unexcelled, featureless, and secondless bliss called Brahmānanda. The Śruti describes Ānanda (pleasure) as the central part of Ānandamaya as body. And Śaṅkara says :

“Ānanda or worldly pleasure, is really Brahman, which manifests itself in a particular modification of the mind whenever one’s son, friend or other object of desire, is presented by virtue of good Karma. This is known in ordinary life as ‘sensual pleasure’. This pleasure is momentary, because the Karma which gives rise to the particular mood of the mind, is unstable. As the mind is more and more freed from sullying impressions by the practice of concentration, meditation, chastity and reverential faith which dispel the darkening Tamas, it becomes more and more clear and transparent, and the pleasure amplified to that extent” (94).

Thus we learn that Brahmānanda or Divine Bliss itself, assumes the guise of worldly pleasure owing to concomitant conditions. That is why the Śruti says “Who could be active and who could breath, if there were not this Bliss in Ākāśa ?” implying thereby that all human activities really aim at the attainment of this bliss (65). And it is for this reason, too that the highest type of worldly happiness, attained through external and internal practices, is pointed out here, to enable us to trace this Supreme Bliss. Śaṅkara observes :

“As consciousness is more and more screened by ignorance and as ignorance becomes more and more intense, a particle of the Highest Bliss itself becomes the unstable worldly pleasure experienced by Brahmā and other beings downward in the measure of their Karma, meditation and the external means available. This same Bliss is experienced in greater and greater degrees by Manuṣyas, Gandharvas and other beings in the higher planes according as Avidyā, desire and Karma decrease, till the highest point is reached in the bliss of Brahman. When, on the other hand, distinction of subject and object is blotted out by Vidyā, it becomes the Natural Bliss, perfectly uniform and non-dual” (71).

It will be observed that here, as elsewhere, Avidyā is radically responsible for the apparent distinction of the Divine and the mundane. The difference between Brahmānanda and worldly pleasures, degrees of worldly happiness and its impermanence - are all creations of Avidyā. Just as the removal of this veil of ignorance by knowledge, results in the realization of Brahman untainted by the manifold universe, and in the absolute identity of

Brahman and Jīva untinged with Kōśas - or rather, just as the universe and individual self enveloped by Kōśas lose their self-identity in, and reveal their eternally real nature as Brahman - so also all worldly happiness with its apparently various degrees, is seen to merge its self-identity in Brahmānanda or Pure Bliss without any distinction of subject and object. Śaṅkara here quotes a Śruti Text : 'It is of this Bliss, verily that other beings enjoy a part'. (Br. 4-3-32). He compares these particles of Bliss-particles only as seen by ignorance to drops of sea-spray implying thereby that worldly pleasures are for ever one with Brahmānanda which is intensively Brahman Itself (75).

Reward of Knowledge

Whoever succeeds in identifying the five Kōśas with the corresponding macro-cosmic Upādhis of Brahman and melting each preceding Kōśa-self in the succeeding one by realizing it as a more subtle, more pervasive and as such more entitled to be regarded as the true Self, finally intuits Brahman as his very Self. He has absolutely nothing to be afraid of, for he verily becomes Brahman Itself, simultaneously with the dawn of such intuition (98). He need no more fear the consequences of omitting any good deed or committing a bad one. For in his eyes both the good and the bad have been sublimated and are now indistinguishable from his own Self (88). No desires remain for him unfulfilled ; for desires too, have now melted into Ātman. It is only adopting the common parlance that the Śruti sings his praise when it declares that he can assume all forms and enjoy desired objects in whatever worlds they may happen to exist (110).

Knowledge and Ignorance

Thus, according to Śaṅkara, the process of the one Brahman becoming the manifold universe, Brahman's entering the body as a living soul, the soul's introspection and discrimination of the five Kōśas, and its final realization and rest in the Bliss of Brahman ineffable and incomprehensible, and beyond the pale of fear, these and other details belong to the province of Adhyārōpa or deliberate imputation only, merely intended as a device to make the teaching intelligible to the enquiring mind (86, 90) ; for all duality is a figment of Avidyā. One may convince oneself of this truth by turning one's mind to the experience of deep sleep, where, in the absence of Avidyā, no trace of duality is to be seen. It cannot be contended that non-experience of duality in that state, may itself be due to ignorance, just like the perception of the dual world in the other two states ; for, what we call sleep is the natural state of Ātman not contingent on any extraneous factor (81).

In truth, however, neither knowledge nor ignorance is a property of the Self, inasmuch as they are both objects of intuition, whereas the Self itself can never be objectified. They belong, therefore, to the category of names and forms, superimposed on the Self (83) like day and night that are naively imputed to the Sun.

The Present Commentary

The Bhāṣya on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, though written in a very simple style, contains many such valuable thoughts often tersely put in aphoristic sentences demanding an elucidative commentary. There is available, no

doubt, the invaluable Vārtika by Sureśvarācārya the immediate disciple of Śaṅkara, but it is in itself too brief for a beginner to understand all that is implied in it. Ānandagiri's Ṭīka and Sāyaṇa's elaborate Bhāṣya on Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, are, as observed in my Introduction to Śikṣāvalli, often wide of the mark, and cannot be taken for safe guides on many a knotty point that puzzles the ordinary student of the Bhāṣya.

Feeling therefore, that an explanatory commentary on the Bhāṣya, is still a desideratum, I have tried, in my humble way, to supply this want. The procedure adopted here, is the same as in my 'Māṇḍūkya Rahasya Vivṛtiḥ', a complete explanation of the Bhāṣya in all its implications from the beginning to the end in the order in which they occur, together with a critical review of objections to Śaṅkara's interpretation by recent writers belonging to other schools of Vedānta, so as to bring to the forefront the comparative excellence of Śaṅkara's system.

For this purpose, I have relied upon Śaṅkara's other commentaries on the Prasthāna Trayī or the Tripod of Vedānta (to wit : Upaniṣads, Bhagavadgītā and Brahma-Sūtras), Upadeśha Sāhasri of Śaṅkara, Vārtikas of Sureśvarācārya, and Gauḍapāda's famous Kārikas, as my exclusive authorities for determining the traditional method and the cardinal doctrines of Vedānta. I have not hesitated to examine any errors of thought or interpretation in other commentaries, which I deemed to be in clash with Śaṅkara's views on points of importance.

VI. BRAHMAVIDYĀRAHASYA-VIVṚTIḤ

(Introduction)

The Title of the Work

This book has been entitled *Brahmavidyārahasya-vivṛtiḥ* because it aims at revealing the true nature of *Brahmavidyā* or the right knowledge of Brahman. Brahman is, as most of us know, the Reality underlying all the phenomenal universe. All Upaniṣads, according to Śaṅkara, purport to teach that Brahman alone as the real Self of the universe, and that each one of the individual selves in it is essentially identical with that Brahman.

Brahman in Its Dual Aspect

Before arriving at this ultimate conclusion of Upaniṣadic teaching, the interpreter of the texts has to surmount two seemingly formidable difficulties. In the first place he has to recognize that Brahman, which is in Itself void of all specific features (*Nirviśeṣa*) and therefore, ineffable, is defined in positive terms (such as सत्यम् real, ज्ञानम् consciousness, आनन्दम् bliss) as often as it is described negatively (e. g. निष्कलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं निरवद्यं निरञ्जनम् partless, actionless, free from plurality, free from blemish, untainted). And in the second place he has to realize that Brahman is presented in two different aspects, viz, in a context where enquiry into Its real nature is in view, and in another context where meditation on Its nature is enjoined. In the former case, Brahman is called *Para Brahman*, higher Brahman, and even while It is taught through associating factors these are to be regarded only as devices employed for purposes of instruction and not

as actually appertaining to it. In the latter case it is *Apara Brahman* the lower Brahman and should be regarded as endowed with qualifying adjuncts and both Brahman and Its qualities must be supposed to have been recommended for meditation. Śaṅkara has stated this in so many words when he observes : एवम् एकमपि ब्रह्म अपेक्षितोपाधि- संबन्धं निरस्तोपाधिसंबन्धं च उपास्यत्वेन ज्ञेयत्वेन च वेदान्तेषूपदिश्यते । “Thus one and the same Brahman is taught in Upaniṣads as qualified by adjuncts to be regarded as belonging to It for the purpose of meditation, and as devoid of all associating factors when it is proposed to be known.” (S. Bh. 1-1-12, p. 35.)

Inadmissible Interpretations of Vedānta

Failure to discriminate these governing principles of interpretation, has misled some other Bhāṣyakāras, notably Rāmānuja for instance, into regarding the entire body of the Upaniṣads as purporting to teach a qualified Brahman throughout and denying that there are any texts that teach Brahman devoid of specific features. And the inability to understand Śaṅkara's terminology correctly in regard to the use of words like *Īśvara* and *Guṇa* has been responsible for the misinterpretation of Śaṅkara on the part of a subschool which, while recognizing the distinction of the higher Brahman without distinctive qualities (निर्गुण) and the lower Brahman with particular qualities (सगुण), maintained the absurd doctrine that even knowers of the non-dual Brahman become merged only in the qualified Brahman and have to wait for absolute release till all the innumerable souls are finally released (सर्वमुक्ति) !

The Scope of the Present Sub-Commentary

In order to guard against all such aberrations, I have chosen this particular chapter of the *Chāndōgya* where the *Saḡuṇa* and the *Nirguṇa* doctrines are couched in similarity of expression with regard to the description of Brahman and the goal to be reached, but two distinct and different methods of approach are detailed in the course of presentation. I have made a sustained effort both in the body of the work and in the Appendix to show how one and the same Brahman with the same epithets, is addressed to two different aspirants of two distinct levels of the intellect who are expected to meditate or intuit after attentive enquiry and reap the benefit of their effort in a world hereafter or in this very life according to their desert.

The work itself is divided into two main sections. The first is a description of the steps of meditation to be practised before one gets a vivid vision (साक्षात्कार) of the goal and the eschatological fruits to be reached in the Highest Heaven or *Brahma-lōka*. While this is undoubtedly a path of unflinching faith to the very end, yet there are hopeful signs of experience felt in this very life also as will be noticed in the secondary fruits vouchsafed to the devotee. The second section recounts how this Reality can be intuited here and now by a qualified and strenuous enquirer through introspection. The results of the enquiry as revealed through the dialogue between Prajāpati and Indra, also serve as a guarantee of what is taught in the previous section. Reason is thus made the support of faith and places the Upaniṣadic doctrine on a firm foundation.

I fervently hope that this humble attempt will be of some service to students of Śāṅkara-Vedānta in reconciling the apparently conflicting teachings with regard to Brahma-Vidyā.

VII. GĪTĀ ŚĀSTRĀRTHA VIVEKAḤ

(Introduction)

Bhagavadgītā, or 'Lord's Song' as it has been called, has suffered from the very popularity it has gained in the literary world. In proportion to the number of languages into which it has been translated and the numerous new commentaries that have sprung up besides the varieties of expositions that have been making their appearance almost every year, our ability to spot and appreciate the genuine Gītā teaching seems to be thinning out more and more. The great Śāṅkarācārya whose Bhāṣya on the work is the most ancient one yet available, had to bend under the weight of the increasing number of sub-commentaries and newer and newer interpretations.

My aim in writing the present work, however, is not concerned with these differences and conflicts of interpreters. I only wanted to make an experiment and see whether it be not possible to make Śāṅkara explain himself independently of the assistance offered by glossators and whether it be not practicable to get a system of Gītā-teaching by an analysis of the work purely on the basis of the Self-explanatory Bhāṣya. I now find that it is not only feasible but also the only means of arriving at the

conclusive teaching of Gītā as regards both spiritual discipline and enlightenment. Only this way, at least that is what I have come to believe, the several tenets are to be felt to be in perfect unison and form an intelligible whole serving as a guide on the path to aspirants for enlightenment and realization of their true Self. The reader, of course, has to judge for himself and see how far this conclusion of mine is appealing to his own heart.

And now for the teaching itself. Śāṅkara says that Bhagavadgītā is a Smṛti containing the quintessence of all Vedic teaching (समस्तवेदार्थसारसंग्रहभूतम्), and he confirms this view of his in the Sūtra-Bhāṣya also, for even where Bādarāyaṇa appeals to a Smṛti in general terms (e.g. स्मृतेश्च १-२-६, स्मरन्ति च ४-१-१०) Śāṅkara-Bhāṣya adduces specific Ślōkas from Gītā. This view has the sanction of Sri Kṛṣṇa Himself who appeals to the Vedas and the Vedānta tradition in Gītā (p. 46)¹. This fact is of great importance to the seeker of Truth here ; for unlike the other *Darśanas*, Gītā according to Śāṅkara, based as it is on Upaniṣads, never appeals to perception and other canons of right knowledge (*Pramāṇas*) but to the Śāstraic knowledge and universal intuition (ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितम् G. B. 7-2, 9-1). I have therefore, cited the relevant Upaniṣad Texts in foot-notes wherever Gītā appears merely to echo the Śruti without striving to prove facts. This accounts for Śāṅkara's following the traditional custom of styling this sacred work as *Gītā-Śāstra*, implying thereby that it is based upon *Śāstra* or the Veda only (pp. 1, 5, 48).

1. The numbers given within brackets are those of the above titled work.

I have given my reason for considering the colophon at the end of each chapter of the *Gītā* as not really forming part of the text (p. 31). Nevertheless, this tail-piece to be found in most of the printed books contains a valuable description of the nature of the contents of the *Gītā*, when it characterizes the work as *Brahma-Vidyā* (knowledge of Brahman), and *Yōga-Śāstra* (the Science of Yōgas), for notwithstanding the loud protestation of the dualistic schools of Vedānta to the contrary, Bhagavad-gītā is really *Brahma-Vidyā* in the strict sense of the term; that is to say, it closely follows Upaniṣads when it declares in unmistakable terms that Brahman is the very Self residing in the heart of each creature (अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः, Bhg. 10-20), and conversely the individual soul in all the bodies, is really the Divine-Being (क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि, 13-2). For further details regarding the Divinity as understood by the author of *Gītā*, the reader is referred to the Chapter XVIII (in *Bhagavat-tattva-viveka*) of the present work.

As for the other epithet '*Yōga-Śāstra*', it should be observed that on the right understanding of the term '*Yōga*' depends what we would regard as the essential teaching of this holy scripture concerning the means to final release from life's bondage. According to Śāṅkara ultimate resting in the intuition of Reality, with the metaphysical renunciation of all empirical activity is what is called '*Yōga*', while the secondary Yōgas, to wit, the *Karma Yōga*, the *Dhyāna Yōga*, and the *Bhakti Yōga*, are so called because they directly or indirectly lead to this *Yōga par excellence* (pp. 20, 24). In particular, according

to Gītā, each and every 'Yōga' becomes entitled to be called by that name only in so far as it is somehow related to Bhagavān or the Divine Being (p. 132).

It should be especially noted that the terms 'Yōga' and 'Sāṅkhya' do not bear the same connotation in Gītā as they do in the schools of philosophy ordinarily known by these names. I have therefore, drawn the attention of the reader to this fact at the very outset (Chapters 4 and 5) so as to wean away his mind from the usual prejudice against Gītā which has led some thinkers to surmise that this scripture is a mixture of these Darśanas with a sprinkling of Vedānta. Further in order to convince the beginner that Gītā, in spite of its frequent use of Sāṅkhya and Yōga terms, has altogether its own system to offer, I have in the Appendix compared and contrasted it with these two Darśanas with reference to some important particulars of doctrine.

A special feature of the present work is that a considerable portion of it is devoted to discriminate the several shades of meaning of certain important technical terms interspersed throughout, a clear grasp of which alone can enable one to distinguish the several doctrines here propounded. The fairly exhaustive Index at the end is intended to strengthen and prepare the intellect of the beginner for this line of enquiry.

I hope that this humble analysis of Gītā teaching in accordance with Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya will rouse the curiosity of the reader and stimulate him to take to a more diligent study of that sacred work as also of the classical works of that ancient Ācārya with special reference to his views on Gītā. My labour in producing a pioneer work of this

kind will have been amply rewarded if Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa's grace produces this effect, upon the minds of even a small number of those that happen to dip into this booklet.

VIII. VEDĀNTINS MEET

(Introduction)

I am very happy to undertake the editing of this collection of contributions by Vidwāns written in response to my 'Appeal to Thoughtful Vedāntins'

It goes without saying that each of the writers is personally responsible for his own views in the matter. My portion of the work, therefore, lay mostly in preparing the manuscripts for the press, with only such additions as would facilitate ready reference to the corresponding questions raised in the appeal. For the same reason the pamphlet itself has been bodily reproduced here at the very commencement. An English summary of each article has been prefixed for the convenience of those readers, who being more conversant with English would like to have some aid in following the train of thought adopted in the original contributions.

A single exception to this self-imposed limitation, has been the article of Śāstra Ratnākara, Brahmaśrī Polagam Śrīrāma Śāstrigaḷ. That learned Pundit, whose opinion was most needed in this connection, did not deign to send us his valued contribution in spite of repeated requests, and I had no alternative but to make relevant extracts

from his extensive Introduction to the Pañca Pādika, in editing which the Śāstrigaḥ has devoted nearly a hundred pages to questions kindred to those mooted in my pamphlet circulated for this symposium. In fact, a considerable portion of that Introduction is taken up to expose the fallacies, which, in the opinion of that scholar, I myself have committed in my writings. What is more, I have even been charged with having plagiarized the views expressed in the Laghu Manjūṣa of Nageśa Bhaṭṭa. In these circumstances I have felt it incumbent on me to review the opinion of Śrī Śāstrigaḥ under each head, and give out my own genuine views, so as to leave no doubt whatever in the minds of readers regarding my position.

It is a maxim of ancient teachers that doubts and misconceptions are dispelled and truth fully revealed through discussion with those proficient in any particular branch of knowledge. Acting on that principle, I shall try here to clarify my position by stating my impression of Śaṅkara's system in some-what greater detail than I have done in the Appeal prefixed.

1. Adhyāsa (super-imposition) is nothing but mistaking one thing for another. And Avidyā, as Śaṅkara has defined it in so many words, is the mutual superimposition of the Self, the only Reality, and the not-self. There is no other Ignorance worth the name, which according to Śaṅkara is directly sublated by Vidyā or the discriminative knowledge of the Self as it is. Doubt and mis-perception, are, it is true, also comprehended in the connotation of the term and are sometimes even expressly stated to be such. But since no human thought-process is possible without the pre-supposition of Adhyāsa, this latter

is pre-eminently entitled to be called Avidyā. (See Adhyāsa Bhāṣya. G. B. 13-2).

Therefore, those who imagine that the object superimposed is primarily meant by the term Avidyā, and it is that which has got to be removed by true knowledge, not only do violence to Śaṅkara's words, but also disregard a fact of nature and even common sense, inasmuch as no one believes that the apparent silver in the nacre, has got to be removed first by the true Knowledge of nacre, and not one's own false notion of it. (S. B. Intro).

2. It is universally accepted by Vedāntins that in Śaṅkara's system, knowledge is the one means of the SUMMUM BONUM of life, and Upaniṣads expressly say so. Śaṅkara avers that knowledge vipes off all ignorance or Adhyāsa, the source of all ills of life. And it goes without saying that knowledge can dispel, nothing else than subjective ignorance. (Tai, Mu., S. B. Intro.)¹

It is therefore, clear that thinkers who assert that the source of all ills spoken of by Śaṅkara, is the Mūlāvidyā alone, have to maintain their position only by going against the express statement of Śaṅkara, and Śrutis, and quietly ignoring the essential nature of knowledge which can never destroy existing things.

3. Śaṅkara's very proposition that Upaniṣadic knowledge of Brahman, is meant for the annihilation of Adhyāsa, is sufficient in itself to convince any one that the Bhāṣyakāra never thought of tracing Adhyāsa to its cause. For no one could think of going in search of ignorance

1. The references shown within brackets, are quoted in extenso in the Saṃskṛta Introduction.

after it has been blotted out. And no one is conscious of his ignorance, while he is in its grip. But it is no mere guess by which one has to infer that Śaṅkara does not demand a cause for Avidyā, for he definitely announces that Adhyāsa is beginningless. Nor could one think of a beginning to it, since even time is a creation of Adhyāsa, and causal relation is inconceivable without the pre-supposition of time. No doubt Śaṅkara does declare that all super-imposition derives its breath from non-discrimination, but it is self-evident that he is not thinking of a temporal relation between non-discrimination (अविवेक) and super-imposition. He only means to say that Adhyāsa disappears as soon as discriminative knowledge dawns. Upaniṣads are never tired of declaring that the individual self as well as all this apparent universe is really Brahman and nothing else. (Muṇ. 2-2-11, Br. 3-7-23, G. Bh. 13-26, S. B. Intro).

It is therefore, nothing but a wild-goose-chase to start in pursuit of a cause for Adhyāsa.

4. Such being the case, illustrations like that of the silver in the nacre, or the rope in the snake, interspersed in Śaṅkara's commentaries, meant as they are to contrast truth with error, only imply that false appearances being only the figment of ignorance, cease to impose themselves upon us the moment the real nature of their substrate is ascertained. These appearances in themselves, are neither born nor destroyed by true knowledge, in fact they never exist in any way as entities, for they are merely thought-constructs. (G. B. 13-21, Ch. B. 2-23-i, G. B. 2-16, 4-24).

It is therefore, so much labour lost to enter into speculation about the nature, cause and process of birth or destruction of these false appearances.

5. The seed form of the universe, known by several names such as Avyakta, Akṣara, Avyākṛta, Ākāśha, Prakṛti and so on, is only the object of inference based upon the false conception of duality. This seed evolving itself into the individual aggregate of the body and the senses, lends itself to the mutual super-imposition of the Self and the notself. It is this super-imposition, as we have already seen, which is known by the name of Avidyā in Śaṅkara's system, while the inferred seed of all phenomena - including the aggregate of the body and the senses - is called by the significant name of Māyā, false appearance due to ignorance. In Bhagavadgītā, where the terminology of the Sāṅkhyas has also been pressed into service, it is observed that "The Puruṣa staying in Prakṛti, enjoys the Guṇas born of Prakṛti, and the reason for his being re-born in good, bad or indifferent lives, is his clinging to the Guṇas" (Bh. 13-21). Śaṅkara explains this as meaning that the super-imposition of Prakṛti (Māyā) and Puruṣa, as well as the resultant desire, is at the bottom of all empirical life. Thus according to Śaṅkara, Avidyā being the occasion of the appearance of the not-self and the ruinous identification of the Self with it, should not be confounded with Avyākṛta, Prakṛti, or Māyā which is only an illusory appearance. (S. B. 2-1-9; G. B. 13-20, 14-5, 18-48).

6. Man generally regards himself as an individual possessed of an aggregate of body and senses, and consequently passing through the waking, dream and deep-

sleep. It is owing to this natal super-imposition that he is an agent and experiencer of the fruits of his actions. From the higher standpoint, however, where he shakes himself off this aggregate by discrimination, he was never tainted by these so-called states. From that thought position, therefore, it is not at all in point to ask whether there is Avidyā in sleep. For what question can there be of Avidyā in sleep when sleep itself ceases to have any meaning ? This argument applies *pari passu* to the series of birth, subsistence and death as well as to that of origination, sustentation and dissolution of the world. As a matter of fact, these states even while they appear, are shot through and through with the Pure Consciousness of the Self and are no entities apart from It. (S. B. 2-1-9, G. B. 2-17, 18).

7. As a concession to empirical view, however, Vedāntins adopt the common-sense view of the states of consciousness, and try to take the enquirer step by step to the realization of Truth. To this end, they teach that the individual self senses duality in waking, in the dream-state it is aware of apparent phenomena presented by waking impressions, where as in deep sleep it is perfectly oblivious not merely of external objects, but even of itself. Asked to account for this total absence of consciousness, the Vedāntin offers a two-fold answer based on the Śruti. Jīva is such only so long as he is related to a mind and that relation, being the effect of Avidya, is never quite blotted out except by the knowledge of Reality. Now consciousness is possible only when this is manifest as in waking or dream, and is therefore, out of question when it is latent as in sleep. That Jīva is not

altogether free from the limitation of the mind even in that condition, can be verified from the circumstance that no sooner one wakes from sound sleep, than he becomes aware of the manifold world.

Thus far, the answer is from the thought position of deliberate attribution (अध्यारोप) of states to Jīva. The other answer is from the transcendental stand-point. The individual self is never other than the real Self which is ever free. Even while Jīva appears to be invested with the aggregate of the body and the senses, he remains the untainted witness of it all, since he can freely shake off that disguise as he passes on to the dream-state where he can be least suspected to be affected by the illusory surroundings. The so-called deep-sleep reveals his true nature in all its completeness, for according to Śruti he is wholly merged, as it were, in Pure Consciousness or Brahman which knows no second. To conceive the Self in sleep as ignorant is altogether a delusive notion since sleep, trance and other kindred states by their very nature shut out all possibility of either knowledge or error. Nor can one be said to be unconscious in that state, if state it were; for, of what possibly could one be said to be unconscious where there is absolutely nothing else than the Self ? Śrutis, therefore, rightly proclaim, "Being consciousness itself, he is not conscious of another, for there is no other, distinct from him of which he could be possibly aware." (Br). An examination of the so-called three states, therefore, discloses our self to be altogether free from all states, the eternally Pure Consciousness, ever free from all bondage of Samsāra. That we pass through the three states of consciousness, that we appear

to age, die, and are born again, and that there is creation, sustentation and dissolution of the world, is an inborn delusion of the human mind, which can be overcome only by the dawn of Vedāntic enlightenment.

In the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad and Gauḍapāda's Kārikas thereon with Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya, another method of the examination of the three states can be seen. Waking and dream are first shown to be equal in all respects, thus denying all claims of waking to a superior degree of reality. The three states, appearing and disappearing as they do, each state wiping out the other two, are then shown to lose every claim to reality in the metaphysical sense of the term. Ātman or our real Self, who maintains His self-identity unaffected by the appearance or disappearance of the states, is thus clearly seen to be the only entity that is really Real. (S. B. 1-3-20, 2-3-30, 2-3-31, 4-2-8; Br. 4-3-7, 4-3-21, 4-2-8, 1-3-20 ; Ch. B. 6-9-3; M. Bh. 7; G. K. 2-9-, 10; 2-14).

8. To sum up, the only Avidyā in Śaṅkara's Vedānta, is the mutual identification, and the mistaken transference of the properties, of the real Self and the unreal not-self, which may be illustrated by the instance of the mis-conceiving a rope to be a snake. All human proceeding whether secular or sacred, is prompted by, and is wholly within the sphere of, this Avidyā. Man is ignorant, lured by the sense-objects, and acts and reaps the fruit of his actions within the field of this Avidyā. That he reverts to a more discriminating and considerate mode of life, and acting upon the advice of Vedānta and a wise teacher, gets enlightenment and realizes his unalienable identity with Brahman, is also within the purview of this Avidyā.

Throughout his career, extrovert or introvert, Avidyā alone is responsible for all the display of his activities, though the individual himself never suspects it until he finally emerges from the somnambulism by knowing the truth taught by Vedānta. Hence it has been most aptly called the Avyakta (unmanifest) in the Kaṭha text ‘महतः परमव्यक्तम्’ ‘The Unmanifest is greater than even the great living self’. In a secondary sense, the primordial matter - the potential seed-form of the world undifferentiated into names and forms, is also called Avyakta, since, it is unmanifest as compared with the manifold world, and since, it is hard to define as either identical with or distinct from the Self. Moreover, it is also called Avyakta or Akṣara (imperishable) just to distinguish it from the Supreme Self, which is metaphysically the subtlest principle transcending all that is knowable and perishable.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that Śaṅkara always styles this primordial matter Prakṛti by the significant name Māyā, but never by the name of Avidyā or any other synonym of ignorance. And conversely, he invariably calls the mutual super-imposition of the Self and the not-self by the name of Avidyā or some equivalent of it, but we do not meet with any instance where it is called Māyā. Coming down to the commentaries, we see that this rule is observed more in the breach than in practice. In the school of the Mūlāvidyā theory where the law of causation takes precedence of the principle of truth and error, this usage is of course justifiable. But can we use the terms ‘Māyā’ and ‘Avidyā’ indiscriminately even while strictly adhering to Śaṅkara’s Adhyāsa-Vāda ?

This question has been neither posed nor critically considered in any Vedāntic discussion so far as I am aware. I shall therefore, venture my own opinion in the matter, and leave the readers to judge for themselves. In so far as Māyā or Prakṛti is a figment of Avidyā proper, I think that one is perfectly justified in calling it Avidyā in a secondary sense, just as one may say 'This is all his foolery' meaning thereby the result of that person's foolish pranks. And conversely in so far as Avidyā is regarded as a function of the mind and is included in the world of names and forms, it may be also called 'Māyā' meaning thereby an illusory appearance. But keeping in mind the fact that 'Avidyā' primarily denotes a species of knowledge and 'Māyā' an illusory object, we cannot but exclusively follow Śaṅkara's practice in using the terms, if we do not wish to confuse the minds of our readers.

One thing, however, should be clearly borne in mind. All this distinction of Vidyā and Avidyā, Avidyā and Mayā, and so forth, is only a concession to the empirical view, and only a device adopted for the purpose of teaching the truth. Metaphysically speaking, neither Avidyā nor Māyā called into being by it, ever existed as entities side by side with Brahman ; nor is there any need for Vidyā to actually destroy either of the two. Hence Sri Gauḍapāda declares : "This is the whole truth : There is neither dissolution nor origination ; neither a soul in bondage nor anyone that has got to accomplish one's freedom ; neither an aspirant for release nor any one actually released from Samsāra." G. K. 2-32. (S. B. 1-4-3, 1-2-23, 2-1-27 ; G. Bh. 8-20, 21, 13-5, 13-19)

9. I have placed what I consider to be the salient points of Śaṅkara's doctrine of Avidyā before the critical reader. He may now compare it with the other interpretation of it as presented by the supporters of the Mūlāvidyā Theory and arrive at his own conclusion, as to which of the two stands to reason, and can be verified by universal experience, or what is more pertinent to the present enquiry, which of the two interpretations, is more faithful to that great teacher. I have here merely inserted numbers indicating my authorities for statements made. The texts themselves may be seen quoted in extenso in the corresponding portions of the Saṃskṛta Introduction.

Coming now to the charge of plagiarism launched at me, I need only observe that even if it were true that I have actually drawn upon Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa's Laghu Manjūṣā for my reasonings, that in itself would by no means be an occasion for comfort to the advocates of Mūlāvidyā. For it would only mean there should be something wrong with a school of thought whose upholders keep mum so long in the face of an open attack upon their pet doctrine. In point of fact, however, I never knew Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa's allusion to this dogma when I wrote the works refuting it. And now that I am reminded of it, I do not feel at all called upon to exculpate myself from the baseless accusation. For, except for holding that Adhyasā is the only Avidyā acknowledged by Śaṅkara, and that the actual birth of apparent objects is not countenanced by that teacher, there is little or nothing in common between the two methods of approach to the subject. I hope that this will be evident from a comparison of this Introduction with the doctrines attributed to Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa by

Śāstra Ratnākara Śrīrāma Śāstrigaḷ. In particular, Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa's mode of reasoning about apparent objects does not come into line with mine. That Avidyā has a beginning, that, distinct as it is from Brahman, it must needs have a cause, are in my opinion, doctrines fundamentally opposed to Śaṅkara, betraying a palpable confusion of the valuable concept of Adhyāsa with other ideas of lesser importance. Nor am I anxious to keep that scholar's company in calling to witness authorities like Bhāmatī in support of my position, or in adopting dubious methods of interpreting quotations just to win my case. If, therefore, I have ever been the cause of any perturbation to the supporters of Mūlāvidyā, my comparative study of the Śaṅkara Bhāṣya and the commentaries, is solely to blame in this respect.

We shall leave the Manjūṣā at that for the present. A more detailed examination of Nāgeśa's position, I reserve for my shortly forthcoming Samskṛta work, 'The Vedānta Prakṛiya-Pratyabhijñā' wherein I propose to include the study of all schools of Vedānta down the ages.

IX. SŪTRA BHĀṢYĀRTHA TATTWAVIVECANĪ (PART-I)

(Introduction)

The first four Sūtras of the Śārīraka Mīmāṃsa of Bādarāyaṇa, as understood by Śaṅkara, cover the whole ground-work of Vedānta, and are therefore, well-worth a

careful and critical study at the hands of thinkers who wish to make a true estimate of Śaṅkara's teachings.

The first Sūtra begins with an exhortation to the earnest student to enter upon an enquiry into the nature of Brahman since right knowledge of It alone can lead to the highest good or release from the bondage of mundane life. The second Sūtra describes Brahman as the sole cause of the beginning, sustentation and dissolution of the universe. The third declares that Brahman is known only through the Śāstra or Upaniṣads, while the fourth points out that this fact is ascertained from a study of the main purport of all Upaniṣads.

The first impression that a cursory reading of Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya leaves on an uncritical mind, is that, Bādarāyaṇa's work is nothing more than a system of dogmatic and speculative theology inasmuch as Śaṅkara not only appeals to an exegetical consideration of various Upaniṣad passages, but also carries on logical discussions both in the defence of the system he tries to bring out of these sacred texts and in his refutation of the opponent systems. And this impression gains additional strength after a study of the various works belonging to the two conflicting schools of Śaṅkara's interpreters. For Vācaspati-Miśra and Prakāśātman the foremost leaders of these schools, not only hold diametrically opposite views on important points, doctrinal as well as exegetical, of Advaita Vedānta, but are contradicted by representatives of their own individual school, who sometimes differ among themselves.¹ This leaves the critical student in great doubt as

1. The curious reader may refer to the work 'Vedānta-Prakriyā-Pratyabhijñā' where this subject is discussed at greater length.

to the exact tenets held by Śaṅkara no less than to the method employed by him in demonstrating them.

In these circumstances, a new commentary on Śaṅkara's Bhāṣyas, especially on the Sūtra Bhāṣya which aims at setting forth the fundamentals of Vedānta, has become an urgent desideratum for all earnest students of Śaṅkara.

In the new commentary now presented to the public, I have endeavoured to bring out in full relief (1) the method of *Ādhyāroṣa-Apavāda* (super-imposition and re-scission) which reconciles all apparent contradictions with regard to the Absolute or non-dual Reality ; (2) the true nature of the so-called knowledge of Brahman, and of Vedāntic reasoning as distinguished from logical reasoning ; (3) the functions of Upaniṣad texts which reveal Brahman or the Highest Reality, and (4) the immediate nature of freedom from worldly bondage, which accrues to the enlightened soul directly after the fundamental ignorance is dispersed by Vedāntic teaching. These and other truths which Śaṅkara has been at pains of expounding in unmistakable terms, but have been obscured by the mis-interpretation by commentaries or mis-representation by adverse critics, have all been made to emerge in their true colours, through discussions introduced for the purpose of explaining and throwing new light on certain passages in the Bhāṣya. I hope I shall not be deemed to be hyper-critical or dis-respectful to great names in my endeavour to clear the great Śaṅkara of the charge of being a mere dogmatic theologian or a scholastic thinker, or even a mystic appealing to some special intuition, as he has been made out to be by some interpreters or critics belonging to other schools of Vedānta.

I have throughout used Śaṅkara's own phraseology and line of reasoning as far as possible to show that his Bhāṣya presents a system of Vedāntic thought backed by a hoary tradition, and can stand the test of being a consistently worked-out philosophy of life based on genuine reason and universal experience, for all times to come, against onslaughts of carping criticism, if only it is not interfered with by officious interpretation. If at least some of my readers feel that I have succeeded in this attempt to a slight extent, and are stimulated to try to improve upon my way of discovering genuine Śaṅkarite Vedānta, I shall feel amply rewarded.

X. SŪTRA BHĀṢYĀRTHA TATTWAVIVECANĪ (PART-II)

(Introduction)

The reader is requested to go through my introduction to the *Vivecanī* on the *Jijñāsādhikaraṇa-Bhāṣyā*. I have explained there at some length the importance of the first four Sūtras of the *Śaṅkarā-Mīmāṃsā* as covering the whole ground-work of Vedānta as understood by Śaṅkara. I have also pointed out the circumstances that led me to undertake a new sub-commentary on that portion of Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya, which sets forth the fundamentals of the Vedāntic System.

The present work which relates to the Bhāṣya on the second Sūtra, is a sustained attempt to clarify Śaṅkara's

real position with regard to the Vedāntic idea of 'causality', much on the same lines as were adopted in the previous *Adhikaraṇa* to explain the true nature of 'Knowledge' of Brahman. In both cases it will be noted, Śaṅkara uses these terms knowledge and causality in a metaphysical sense. By knowledge, he means not a concept of something discrete, but the intuition of one's own self as Brahman, resulting after the elimination of all unreal *Upādhis* whose characteristics are wrongly super-imposed on the Self. Similarly, Brahman is said to be the 'cause' of the world not in the empirical sense of an invariable antecedent some thing which transforms itself into something else which is called its effect, but in the metaphysical sense of something which falsely *appears* as something else, while remaining intact all the same. This causal nature is ascribed to Brahman only as a device in pursuance of the method of the *Ādhyārōpa-Apavāda Nyāya* to reveal Brahman's true nature as a metaphysical entity, One without a second, its apparent effect, the world, being really ever essentially one with it.

Another truth that has been made abundantly clear in the Bhāṣya on the second Sūtra is that Brahman's being the sole cause if the world's birth, sustentation and dissolution is not provable by logical inference (*Anumāna-Pramāṇam*), but can be realized only through intuition arising out of the Śruti-teaching supported by Vedic reasoning as distinguished from the *Pramāṇa* known as inference.

One more teaching of Śaṅkara that has been clarified here is that the so-called creation of the world by Brahman is no more than the differentiation into various

names and forms (नामरूपाभ्यां व्याकरणम्) from their undifferentiated condition, and that these names and forms - whether differentiated or not - are only super-impositions of Avidyā on Brahman and never affect Its true nature as the Absolute, free from all characteristics. Relative to the world of names and forms and the individual souls in it, Brahman is called *Īśvara* the Overlord, omniscient and omnipotent, and when Brahman is recommended in the Śrutis to be meditated upon as endowed with certain properties to modifications pertaining to those self-same names and forms, it is known as *Saguṇa* (Qualified), *Apara* (Lower) as contrasted with Brahman in itself which is *Nirguṇa* (free from all attributes), and *Para* (Higher). It is, however, to be remembered that Brahman is in no way rendered inferior by being thus spoken of as *Īśvara* or *Apara* or *Saguṇa-Brahma*. Accordingly Śaṅkara draws our attention to this fact, time and again by using the terms Para-Brahman, *Īśvara*, *Paramēśvara*, and *Paramātmān* indiscriminately for each of those aspects of Brahman when the context leaves no doubt as to which of them is meant.

As in the case of the previous *Adhikaraṇa*, I have tried to impress on the reader the significance of these and other doctrines not only in the body of the present sub-commentary but also in the Appendix which is devoted to the discussion of five different topics relevant to the subject matter or the Sūtra in hand. I am well aware that some of the discussions raised in the Appendices and even in the body of the sub-commentary on the Sūtras, may not be easily intelligible to the beginner who would naturally prefer to get at the general drift of Śaṅkara's

teaching rather than be lost in the maze of controversy, but the very aim of the present work as its name भाष्यार्थतत्त्वविवेचनी indicates is to present the special features of Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya after sifting them from extraneous teachings liable to be mistaken for Śaṅkara's owing to mis-interpretations of his followers or mis-interpretations of hostile schools. As to how far I have been successful in the attempt, the critical reader alone has to be the judge.

XI. SŪTRA BHĀṢYĀRTHA TATTWAVIVECANĪ (PART-III)

(Introduction)

The present portion of my commentary relates to the Bhāṣya on the third and the fourth Sūtras. The importance of the Bhāṣya and these Sūtras, lies in its clarification of the concept of *Śāstra Pramāṇya* in particular. Upaniṣads otherwise known by the name of Vedāntas, are rightly considered by all orthodox interpreters as Vedas. Difference of opinion prevails, however, with regard to how this part of Vedas, is to be regarded as a Pramāṇa or valid means of knowledge with regard to Brahman, whose knowledge is taken to be a means of *Summum Bonum*. All schools of Vedānta, ancient or modern, advaitic or non-advaitic, are of the unanimous opinion that Vedas can be regarded as pramāṇa only if they reveal truths beyond the ken of other Pramāṇas like perception or inference, for if they merely expatiate upon what is known by perception or some other Pramāṇas, the very

appellation of Pramāṇa would be a misnomer. But Vedāntins of Śaṅkara's tradition stand alone in holding Upaniṣads as Pramāṇa because they reveal an existent entity, Brahman or Ātman, which does not come within the scope of perception or even the texts of Karmakāṇḍa.

Failing to realize that the Absolute Ātman who is no object, cannot be objectified by any Pramāṇa, the ancient Vedāntins could not grasp the idea that Ātman cannot be made subservient to any injunction. Many of them held that all Vedas teach some Karma or things subservient to some injunction such as meditation. Even today all Vedāntins hold that Brahman or the Highest God, has to be meditated upon as enjoined in the Vedas, and that the Highest Good or Mōkṣa is to be experienced in a special Heaven.

An important doctrine of Śaṅkara-Vedānta, is that *the Vedānta texts fall into two classes*, one set of them enjoining Upāśanas or meditations which, performed, yield fruits to be enjoyed in this life or lead to joys to be experienced in the other world. The second set of texts, however, teach the nature of Brahman which is the Self of all beings. The syntactical construction (समन्वय) of these texts, is such that they do not lead the enquirers to any action after understanding the meaning of the sentence. The right knowledge of the meaning of the text, leads to the immediate intuition of Brahman as the Self of the whole universe as well as of the enquirer. When this intuition dawns, one would realize that Brahman or Ātman is the All, the One without a second and therefore there is nothing else remaining to be known or done. This is what is called *Sadyō-Mukti* in Śaṅkara-Vedānta. In

Sadyō-Mukti where one's self is identified with the All, there are no Pramāṇas (means of knowledge), nothing to be known, nor is there any knowledge distinct from either of these. Since Vedānta-Śāstra teaches this fact, it is called a Pramāṇa, in that sense.

Another teaching convincingly brought to the forefront in the Sūtra, is that *the seemingly injunctive texts* about Śravaṇa (study of texts), Manana (reflection) and Nididhyāṣana (contemplation), are meant only to turn the seeker's mind inward unlike the genuine injunctions of Karmas or Upāsanas. Some of the sub-commentators, and Bhāṣyakāras of other schools of Vedānta following the lead of these Post-Śaṅkara's, have misrepresented Śaṅkara as implying that for Jñāna, Śravaṇa and other means are injunctions of some sort. I have made a sustained attempt in these pages to show that verbs in the imperative mood in the context of Jñāna, are intended only to recommend introspection and make the inquirer ready to study the import of the texts teaching the nature of Ātman.

A fourth teaching of Vedānta which follows as a corollary of the nature of Samanvaya taught here, demands a passing mention. I have already referred to this in connection with Śāstra-Prāmāṇya, but it bears repetition to call the attention of the student of Vedānta. No word or sentence actually teaches Brahman as an object of knowledge, or meditation and Brahman can never be taught as an object expressible in words. The function of the texts, is only to negate all distincts so as to reveal Ātman as He is.

The method of Ādhyarōpāpavāda is used throughout Vedānta in teaching the nature of Reality. This Method

is so important that it deserves to be studied in all its bearings upon Vedāntic teaching in a separate treatise.¹ But the reader's attention is specially invited to the Samskr̥ta Appendix to the present work, explaining how this method has been applied to all the first four Sūtras and the Bhāṣya thereon. Śaṅkara's arguments would lose their force for one who failed to understand the *modus operandi* of this traditional method.

I have not said anything here upon the criticisms to be found both in the body of the book and in the Appendix touching the post-Śaṅkara Advaitins again and again. The reader is requested to make a careful study of the various interpretations of Śaṅkara, which have gained currency nowadays in the name of Śaṅkara. Unless one has succeeded in trying to get out of the morass created by these confusing post-Śaṅkara writings, one can never hope to get at the genuine teaching of the Sūtra-Bhāṣya.

XII. ŚAṆKARA'S SŪTRA-BHĀṢYA

(Prefatory Remarks)

This booklet is intended for readers who have already gone through *Śaṅkara's Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, either in the original Samskr̥ta as taught by our Pundits, or with the help of some English translation under the guidance of some College Professor in one of our Universities.

1. I have written a book entitled 'How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta' which is prefixed to my Samskr̥ta work 'वेदान्तप्रक्रियाप्रत्यभिज्ञा'.

Critical students who earnestly desire to ascertain the exact tenor of the Vedāntic System as brought out by that world-famous teacher, are usually bewildered by the conflicting presentations of the drift of the system as found in the various sub-commentaries and the varying estimates of the system found in the writings of modern oriental scholars who have attempted to summarize the teaching of Vedānta. Beginners find little or no solace in the judgment of either learned Vidwāns or Professors. The former think that the followers of different Vyākhyāna Systems have given different expositions of Vedānta only because they judge Truth from different angles of vision; and this in no way affects Reality, since after all, the various modes of treatment are only in the Vyāvahāric (empirical) field ! Most of the Oriental scholars, on their part, are inclined to think that the ancient Vedānta before Śaṅkara and Gaudapāda, laid more emphasis on Upāsana, and did not stress the unreality of phenomena. The general prevailing view about Śaṅkara, is that he (and Gaudapāda) probably ushered in a revolution in Advaita and that his system is very much influenced by Buddhism !

In order to counteract misinterpretations and surmises such as these, I brought out so long ago as 1953 my first Samskr̥ta commentary on the Adhyāsa Bhāṣya, and subsequently followed it up with a work called the *SūtraBhāṣyārtha-Tattva-Vivecanī* in three parts (1964, 1965 and 1970) explaining the purport of the first four aphorisms of Bādarāyaṇa. In these works, I have attempted to show how some of the new doctrines in the sub-commentaries and later Vedāntic Bhāṣyas, are either unconscious aberrations from or deliberate accretions to the pristine purity of the genuine Śaṅkarite Vedānta foisted upon it.

The fact remains, however, that innovations of the writers of later explanatory works on Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on the *Prasthāna-trayī* (Upaniṣads, Bhagavadgītā and Vedānta-Sūtras), have succeeded in gaining the upper hand, and at the present day, it has been almost impossible to extricate Śaṅkara's genuine teaching from the later additions and alterations.

The earnest student of Śaṅkara, is today at a loss to distinguish the genuine teaching from the mess of controversial literature that has sprung up around the Bhāṣya. One is confronted with a number of disputes about what has been called *Avidyā* in Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya :-

(1) What is the essence of *Avidyā* ? Is it the same as *Adhyāsa* or something distinct from it ?

(2) What is exactly *Adhyāsa* ? Is it an entirely different something (what is superimposed like the silver on nacre) or epistemic (super-imposition itself) ? Or is it a generic term denoting both of these ?

(3) What does Śaṅkara exactly mean when he says मिथ्याज्ञाननिमित्तः सत्यानृते मिथुनीकृत्य 'अहमिदम्' 'ममेदम्' इति नैसर्गिकोऽयं लोकव्यवहारः ? Is he referring to a species of misconception here or to *Avidyā-Śakti* (the 'material cause) of false phenomena ?

(4) Is *Avidyā* different from *Māyā*, or are the terms *Avidyā* and *Māyā* mutually convertible, both denoting the same thing ?

(5) What is really the locus of *Avidyā* ? Is it the Jīva (individual soul) or is it Brahman ? Or is it Pure Consciousness itself devoid of all distinction ?

(6) Is *Avidyā* being or non-being ? Or is it something undefinable as either ?

(7) In what sense is *Adhyāsa* beginningless ? How is it endless ?

(8) What is the nature of *Vidyā* ? What is exactly meant by the term *Ātmaikatvavidyā* ?

(9) How does *Vidyā* remove *Avidyā* ? Is there a trace of *Avidyā* left over even after its removal by *Vidyā* ?

(10) Is there anything remaining to be done by the knower even after the dawn of *Vidyā* ?

(11) Is absolute Release attainable in this very birth of the knower ? Or is there any difference in kind or degree between Release while living and Release after death ?

(12) Are all *Karmas* sublated by *Jñāna* ? Or has the fructifying karma to be exhausted by experiencing its fruits ?

(13) How many *avidyās* are there ? Only one common to all transmigratory souls or as many as there are *Jīvās* ?

(14) How are we to reconcile Vedāntic texts which ascribe certain forms and qualities to Brahman with those that deny all characteristics to Brahman ? Is there any distinction between Brahman and *Īśvara* ? Why does Śaṅkara use the terms indiscriminately ?

These and other bewildering questions have been taken up for consideration in my recent work entitled '*Misconceptions about Śaṅkara*' published by Ādhyātma Prakāsha Kāryālaya, Holenarsipur. In the meanwhile, it

has flashed to my mind that an attempt may be made in another direction so as to simplify all difficulties without entering into the arena of dispute and debate. The present brochure is an experiment in that direction.

For more reasons than one, I have chosen the Introduction to the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* for illustrating how the perplexed student of Śaṅkara's traditional Vedānta, can arrive at a definite and indubitable conclusion about the most important cardinal teachings by appealing to Śaṅkara himself to settle all the knotty questions without taking the trouble of consulting any of the sub-commentaries, and can see for himself how far the conflicting explanations of later Śaṅkarites are faithful to the original. What is more, he will be able to spot out the defects of all such interpretations, not only when they import doctrines foreign to the tradition, but signally defeat the very purpose which the Bhāṣya has been at great pains to serve from start to finish.

The serious critic of Śaṅkara's tradition, is advised to note the unique principles governing Śaṅkara's system which most of the misinterpretations have left unnoticed or have altogether ignored in their zeal to usher in their own pet novel doctrines into the structure of the Advaita system.

(1) In the first place, Śaṅkara emphasizes that the tradition of Vedānta primarily treats of the knowledge of an existent entity as distinguished from an act enjoined or even something subservient to karma or meditation.

(2) He therefore, takes it for granted that in matters of enquiry into the nature of Reality (*Brahman* or *Ātman*),

we have not only to observe the exegetical principles of interpretation involving Śrutis etc., but also to recognize intuition etc., as the valid means of knowledge for finalizing this enquiry of the existent entity is to culminate in an *ultimate intuition*, in the same way as the knowledge of any existent object of empirical knowledge.

(3) Śaṅkara's system is unique in recognizing the nature of this ultimate Intuition as transcending all empirical ways of thinking and acting (*Vyāvahāra*) but as effectively removing all the ills of Vyāvahāra for good. The distinction of *Vyāvahāra* and *Paramārtha*, is unique to this tradition.

(4) This tradition is unique, not only in distinguishing the subject-matter of Upaniṣads, but also in discovering the only *method* available in teaching Reality. For Reality (Ātman or Brahman) being an Eternal Subject and Witness, is not only beyond the range of all words and concepts, but being non-dual and devoid of all differences and distinctions as well as specific characteristics, has to be revealed by the exclusive way of *Adhyārōpa-Apavādu* (deliberate superimposition of some empirical characteristic and subsequently rescinding it by pointing to a higher truth) and thus leading the enquirer to intuit It as his own real Self. Failure to appraise the need and value of this method, has tempted the Post-Śaṅkara advaitins not only to formulate some novel doctrine of their own, but to impute it to Śaṅkara himself.

The present work is expected to expound the inner working process of the method and to provide the key to unlock all such doors as have seemed to defy the enquirer's

entry into the inner chamber of Śaṅkara's system. Provided with a correct knowledge of the above mentioned method and principles of interpretation, the critical student of Śaṅkara's traditional Vedānta, will find no difficulty in sifting chaff from the real grain.

The Adhyāsa-Bhāṣya, even while resting on the sure and solid ground of the Upaniṣadic revelation, does not refer to a single quotation as its authority. All the statements here, are supported by reason and universal intuition. Any unprejudiced mind will see that the entire Bhāṣya has been written in a style characterized by unity and emphasis to remind us about the innate human error called '*Adhyāsa*' or the mutual superimposition of the real Self and the unreal not-self. As I have shown in the Appendix, every link in the argument, has been corroborated and amplified in the body of the Bhāṣya, by a sustained appeal to Śruti and intuition, which leaves little or no suspicion that some other doctrine may have been meant by Śaṅkara. And no amount of subterfuge on the part of later sub-commentators, has been successful in persuading the reader to believe that there is any trace of reference in the Bhāṣya, to the so-called '*Avidyā-Śakti*' ushered in by post-Śaṅkara Advaitins.

I very much wished to take up the first Five *Adhikaraṇas* to illustrate how Śaṅkara is in no need of any assistance from commentators to elucidate his teaching inasmuch as he loses no opportunity to explain the cardinal tenets of the traditional system. But owing to strained eye-sight, I have to rest content with the present sample work.

XIII. PAÑCAPĀDIKĀ-PRASTHĀNAM

(Introduction)

.Vedāntic Absolutism Obscured by Later Commentators

After the traditional Absolutism had been placed on a firm footing by Gauḍapādācārya and especially by his grand-disciple Śaṅkarācārya, the ancient rival schools were almost all supplanted and the system held on for some time unchallenged in the field of Indian Philosophy. Innate tendency of the human mind, however, soon asserted itself, and Advaita Vedānta succumbed to the in-roads of realism in the garb of Advaita itself.

This time it was not a full-fledged rival system that attacked the traditional school, but two different systems that reconciled themselves to occupy the subordinate position of supplying critical expositions, called Tīkāś, of Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya so that they might infuse their own doctrines subtly into the dominant philosophy. This artifice was so very successful that the original system soon became inextricable from the teachings of these two rivals and in some respects even mutually opposed schools, and today Vedāntins are nowise disconcerted to accept both of them as forming part and parcel of Śaṅkara's Advaita. The idea is, that there are no doubt some differences of opinion regarding certain doctrines relating to empirical truths, but these are due to the different means of approach employed to reveal the nature of Reality, and do not matter at all so long as both the sub-schools are in perfect agreement about the nature of the Absolute. The critical student of Advaita is thus inevitably thrown into a state of perplexity as to what exactly is the system of

Śaṅkara. Whether that great thinker actually agrees with this or that school, or has a system of his own distinct from both, continues to be an unsolved enigma to this day.

The Scope Of The Present Work

A vast amount of Advaitic literature has grown up around the original works of these two branches, called the *Pañcapādika* and *Bhāmatī* respectively. There have appeared numerous original works, subcommentaries and manuals, each supporting the doctrines of its own tradition and controverting those of writers in the other camp. *Pañca-pādika* in particular, has a brilliant exposition by Prakāśātma Yati, called Vivaraṇa, which has almost cast the original work into shade, so much so that this school now usually goes by the name of the Vivaraṇa school, after this famous work. It is *Pañca-pādika* in particular that I have undertaken to examine in order to see how far the teachings of this sub-commentary, are in consonance with those of the Bhāṣya.

The Schools To Which Pañcha-pādika And Bhāmatī Actually Owe Their Allegiance

I have already shown very briefly in my Introduction¹ to *Vedānta-Prakriya-Pratycbhijñā*, how both the sub-schools differ from Śaṅkara, but my sole aim in that work was to clarify my position that all writers on Vedānta except Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara and Sureśvara, have failed to recognize the only genuine method of Vedānta. The object of the present thesis is to show in detail how

1. Published separately under the title "How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta".

the originators of both these sub-schools professing to follow Śaṅkara., really owe their allegiance to different ancient schools of Vedānta quite distinct from Śaṅkara and at variance with it in many respects. That Vācaspati Miśra, the founder of Bhāmātī Tradition, has actually glossated on Maṇḍana's *Brahma-Siddhi* from which he has freely borrowed and displayed many doctrines and even technical words, verbatim quotations or adaptations therefore in *Bhāmātī*, is too patent to be denied. Detailed substantiation of this allegation, has to be reserved for another occasion. This Miśra's predecessor, the author of the *Pañca-pādikā* on the other hand, has doctrines foreign and even opposed to Śaṅkara's, to prove which we have to rely only on textual criticism but can trace them to no particular treatise of any school so far known. From a casual allusion found in the *Brahma-Siddhi*, however, we can gather that this school, which takes *Avidyā* to be the material cause of the Universe, was still flourishing independently during Maṇḍana's time.; for he writes "तथा चेकम् अविद्योपादानभेदवादिभिः 'अनादिरप्रयोजना चाविद्या' इति" ('The supporters of the theory that *Avidyā* is the material cause of the manifold, aver that *Avidyā* is beginningless and serves no teleological purpose').

The Pañca-pādikā And Its Author

, *Pañca-pādikā* (literally 'consisting of five *pādas*') is actually a fragmentary work containing the discussion of Śaṅkara's Sūtra Bhāṣya on the first four Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa. There are indeed evident indications, in the portion of the work available, that the author actually proposed to comment upon the whole of the Bhāṣya, but

diligent search so far made, has not succeeded in unearthing anything beyond the *Tīkā* on the *Catus-Sūtri* portion. Poetical works called Śaṅkara-Vijayas, ascribe the work to Padmapāda Acārya, the direct disciple of Śaṅkara, but no trustworthy evidence internal or external has been so far adduced by any scholar to ratify this tradition. Nor do we have any reliable information about any other work safely assignable to the author. In his Foreword to the English translation of *Pañcapādika*, Sri B. Bhaṭṭācārya, General Editor of the Gaekwad's Oriental Series, (P. IX) writes that the second work attributed to Padmapāda is *Ātmabōdha Vyākhyāna* also called the *Vedānta Sāra* ; but that work is neither widely known nor published yet. Nor can we be sure of the identity of the author of certain Tāntric works attributed to Padmapāda by tradition. Indeed, we have to make sure in the first place that *Pañca-pādika* is genuinely from the pen of Padmapāda, the direct disciple of Śaṅkara, before we hazard any further judgment respecting the author of the work.

The Aim And Upshot Of The Present Inquiry

I have already stated that the main object of the inquiry instituted in the present work, is to show that *Pañca-pādika* really represents altogether a different school of Vedānta while it covertly poses to be a sub-commentary on a work propounding Vedāntic Absolutism. I am quite aware that I am liable to be charged with sacrilege and blasphemy by the orthodox admirers of a book now universally ascribed to a holy personage, the great Padmapāda himself. But I owe it to myself to declare openly before the earnest students of Śaṅkara-Vedānta, that we should be guilty of a greater sacrilege when we impute

to the sacred names of the universally respected Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda, repositories of genuine Vedāntic tradition, doctrines which they would indignantly repudiate under any circumstances. Being convinced as I am of the disparity and even mutual opposition of these two systems, I have not hesitated to place them before my readers in their true perspective, and to disclose how we have been deceiving ourselves all these days that the one is really an interpretation of the other. It is high time that we ceased stifling our conscience and boldly recognized the distinctive features of the mutually exclusive sets of teachings as such.

Two systems That Are As Poles Asunder

I have summarized the cardinal tenets of each of these schools in the Samskr̥ta Introduction, so that one can see at a glance how, set against each other, they would visibly exhibit their diametrically opposite nature. It will be sufficient here to call attention to the fundamental differences in the very view-points from which they judge things. In the first place, Śaṅkara says that the final intuition of Brahman results from a rational co-ordination of partial intuitions (श्रुत्यादयोऽनुभवादयश्च यथासम्भवम् इह प्रमाणम्, अनुभवावसानत्वात् भूतवस्तुविषयत्वाच्च ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य S. B. 1-1-2, p. 8), universal intuition being taken here as the one source of Vedāntic knowledge. Knowledge arising from Śruti-texts like 'That thou art' is immediate intuition of an existent fact which can never be doubted or denied. (अनुभवारूढं तु ज्ञानफलम् 'यत्साक्षादपरोक्षाद् ब्रह्म' इति श्रुतेः, 'तत्त्वमसि' इति च सिद्धवदुपदेशात् S. B. 3-3-32, p. 407) ; (नासौ नास्ति नाधिगम्यत

इति वा शक्यं वदितुम्, 'स एष नेति नेत्यात्मा' इत्यात्मशब्दात्, आत्मनश्च प्रत्याख्यातुमशक्यत्वात् S. B. 1-1-4, p. 20). According to *Pañca-pādika*, however, doubt is possible even in the case of direct knowledge of Ātman, and reason may have to be called in to rescue this knowledge from insecurity (सम्यग्ज्ञानमपि स्वविषये अग्रतिष्ठितम् अनवाप्तमिव भवति । तेन तत् स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठायै तर्कं सहायीकरोति । p. 91)¹. In the second place, Śaṅkara is sure that final knowledge arising from listening to the Vedāntic text being of the nature of ultimate intuition, identical with Brahman or one's own Self, takes one to the final goal itself and there remains nothing more to be achieved (तस्मात्, सर्वदुःखविनिर्मुक्त-चैतन्यात्मकोऽहम् इत्येष आत्मानुभवः । न चैवम् आत्मानमनुभवतः किञ्चिदन्यत् कृत्यमवशिष्यते । S. B. 4-1-2, p. 463), whereas the author of the *Pañca-pādika* believes that repeated contemplation of that knowledge (ज्ञानाभ्यासः) has got to be practised (p. 97) before direct realization (साक्षात्कारः) accrues to the aspirant. Thirdly, while according to Śaṅkara, Ātman or the Self being an immediacy self-established, needs no proof for establishing its existence (न ह्यात्मा आगन्तुकः कस्यचित्, स्वयंसिद्धत्वात् । न ह्यात्मा आत्मनः प्रमाणमपेक्ष्य सिद्ध्यति । S. B. 2-3-7, p. 268), the author of the *Tīkā* grants (pp. 91-92) that even the immediateness of one's own Self may be questioned (असम्भावनाभिभूतविषयत्वात्). Again, Śaṅkara thinks that the validity of Ātman arising from listening to Vedāntic texts like 'That thou art can

1. References in the brackets are to the *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya* in the case of Śaṅkara and to the pages of the present work in the case of *Pañca-pādika*.

never be questioned since it is the final intuition of the non-dual Ātman (अपि चान्त्यमिदं प्रमाणम् आत्मैकत्वस्य प्रतिपादकम् । नातः परं किञ्चिदाकाङ्क्ष्यमस्ति । सर्वात्मैकत्व- विषयत्वावगतेः । न चेयमवगतिरनर्थिका भ्रान्तिर्वा - इति शक्यं वक्तुम् ; अविद्यानिवृत्तिफलदर्शनात्, बाधकज्ञानान्तराभावाच्च ॥ S. B. 2-1-14, p. 199). The author of the *Tīkā* falls back upon the theological postulate that the Veda being no product of the human mind (शब्दस्तावदपौरुषेयत्वाददुष्टः) is as valid a source of knowledge concerning an existent entity, as it is in the case of injunctions (यथैव विधिवाक्यानाम् pp. 110-111) of rituals. Finally, for Śaṅkara, *Avidyā* is only the mutual superimposition of the Self and the non-self, super-imposition being understood to mean no more than mistaking one thing for another (अतस्मिन् तद्बुद्धिः), as for instance taking nacre for silver. This ignorance of course need not be proved, for it is recognized to be such as soon as pointed out, being within the experience of all of us (सर्वलोकप्रत्यक्षः). For the author of *Pañca-pādika*, however, *Avidyā* is an undefinable inert potentiality of ignorance (अनिर्वचनीया जडात्मिका अविद्याशक्तिः) which clings to the very being of both the self and the external things, capable of transforming itself into an illusory object (p. 19) like the nacre-silver or the rope-snake. This *Avidyā* must be presumed to cling to the being of external things (तत्स्वरूपसत्तामात्रानुबन्धिनी), as otherwise we cannot account for the origin of illusory objects (p.19 मिथ्यार्थविभासानुपपत्तेः). And in the case of the individual soul, we have to postulate this *Avidyā* on the strength of Śrutis which declare the identity of the soul with Brahman ;

for, how else could we explain the absence of the knowledge of this identity except by supposing that *Avidyā* envelops the Brāhmic effulgent nature (ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रकाशाच्छादिका) of the individual self (p. 33) ?

It is obvious that Śaṅkara's is a rational system based upon universal intuition, and *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* in his scheme of arguments are quite intelligible to all who are familiar with the antipathy between knowledge and error in everyday life. The system offered by the writer of *Pañca-pādika* on the other hand, speculates on the basis of a hypothetical *Avidyā* presumed just to account for the appearance of illusory phenomena by a series of controvertible arguments with a view to justify the theological dogma that knowledge of Brahman destroys the world of duality of which the postulated *Avidyā* is the material cause. Who can deny, with such sharp differences of doctrines staring one in the face, that the so-called *Pañca-pādika* (-Vivarāṇa) School offers us a conglomeration of teachings actually pertaining to different and discordant systems somehow fused into one ?

I have tried to array a number of quotations from the Sūtra-Bhāṣya in the body of the present work and some more from Upaniṣads and Bhagavadgītā in the Appendix - as against each discrepant doctrine of the *Pañca-pādika* not only to reveal how antipathetic the latter is to the general trend of Śaṅkara's thought, but also to accumulate and present the many passages scattered in the various Bhāṣyas on each particular subject so that they may serve as a source of ready reference to the earnest student of Śaṅkara. In the course of this critical study of the *Pañca-pādika*, I have sometimes adduced

passages culled from *Vivaraṇa*, *Iṣṭa-Siddhi*, *Sarikṣepa Śārīraka* and *Bhāmātī* as well, in so far as they have any bearing on certain important topics discussed. I trust that these illustrations will be useful not only to convince oneself about the divergent and highly conflicting nature of the Post-Śāṅkara doctrines on particular subjects, but also to serve the purpose of a healthy stimulus to the study of the development of Vedāntic thought.

An Appeal To Puṇḍits And Professors

If I have succeeded in some measure in bringing home to the intellectuals the disharmony which reigns supreme in the realm of the present day Advaita Vedānta owing to the indiscriminate admixture of Śāṅkara and Post-Śāṅkara doctrines, I shall have been amply recompensed for my effort. I earnestly appeal to all scholars - Vedānta puṇḍits as well as University Professors - who may happen to be persuaded in this direction, to make an earnest effort to see that Śāṅkara's original system and the varieties of teachings contained in the sub-commentaries - such as *Pañca-pādikā*, *Vivaraṇa*, *Bhāmātī* or any other - are not mixed up in teaching, so as to allow Advaita Vedānta to continue a mere *pot-pourri* of incoherent ideas. Teachers of Vedānta in the public or private institutions would be really doing a great service to the cause of Advaita, or even Vedānta in general for that matter, if they immediately set about making united efforts in influencing the educational authorities to take active steps to adapt the syllabus so that the original system of Śāṅkara may be studied in its pristine purity before attempts are made to take up the developments in the sub-commentaries.

XIV. VIŚUDDHA VEDĀNTA SĀRAḤ

(Introduction)

Title of the work

This booklet is intended to be a compendium of Vedānta according to Śaṅkara's tradition purged of all later accretions and misrepresentations. It is entitled *Viśuddha-Vedānta-Sāraḥ* (Essence of 'pure' Vedānta) not only in the sense that it aims at distinguishing this system from all other modes of presentation, pre-Śaṅkara or post-Śaṅkara, but also from unnecessary and clashing doctrines imported from *Mīmāṃsā*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Yōga*, *Nyāya* and other systems, with which Vedāntic doctrines are usually confounded in recent Vedāntic treatises and discussions.

In the first place, Śaṅkara-Vedānta has to be contrasted with *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* in so far as it does not take the Śruti to be merely an authority on the nature of Brahman in the same way as the Vedas are, concerning *Dharma* or religious duty, for Śrutis are *Pramāṇa* here because they lead us to the direct intuition (*Anubhava*) of Brahman. In the second place Vedāntas or Upaniṣads, are not taken here to be mere testimony subservient to inference (*Anumāna*), which latter is the most potent means of knowledge for the *Sāṅkhya* and some other *Darśanas*. And in the third place, the Vedānta system does not propose to offer a course of mental discipline with the object of extricating the *Puruṣa*, - who as one's real Self is assumed to be one among many such - from the clutches of *Prakṛti*. Again, Vedānta never appeals to *Pramāṇas*, or empirical means of right knowledge, in

establishing the nature of the objects of knowledge, as the Nyāya does. Nor does Vedānta subscribe to the Vaiśeṣikā's dogma that Ātman is a substance (*Dravya*) and an object of knowledge (*Prameya*). And lastly, Vedānta never agrees with the speculative Buddhism of the Yōgācāra idealist when he infers the sole existence of Vijñāna (momentary consciousness) basing himself on the mere circumstance of invariably simultaneous appearance of both the object and the consciousness of it, and extending the analogy of dreams to waking. Nor is this system an ultra-rationalism like the *Śūnyavāda* of the Mādhyamika who, with a peculiar dialectic of his own, is prepared to demolish logically all views of Reality in order to arrive at the essencelessness of the reasoner himself no less than of all objects.

Actuated by a desire to present the essence of Śaṅkara's Vedānta in a nut-shell from this point of view, I have composed the present work to meet the need of the critical student as well as of the beginner. Accordingly, I have scrupulously confined myself to the standard works of Sri Gauḍapādācārya, Sri Śaṅkarācārya and Sri Sureśvarācārya whenever I had to appeal to authorities in support of my views. Of course the truths of Vedānta, according to this tradition, depend upon reason based upon universal intuition and not upon the idiosyncrasy or a particular line of interpretation of the sacred literature by any individual Ācārya.

The work itself is mainly divided into three sections in view of the three sources of knowledge accepted by this tradition, to wit, direct universal intuition, the mind and the senses. *Adhyārōpa-Apavāda-Prakriyā* (deliberate

superimposition and rescission), the unique method of exposition adopted in Upaniṣads, has been assigned a prominent place, and the line of reasoning known as the *Anvaya-Vyatireka-Nyāya* (tracing the constant reality running through all the variable appearances) has been employed in determining the nature of Reality.

In the second section, special attention of the reader has been drawn to the distinction between the nature of knowledge (*Jñāna*) and meditation (*Upāśana*) on the one hand, and *Nididhyāśana* (revealing contemplation) and *Upāśana* (meditation in its aspect of staying the mind upon Ātman) on the other. And in the third section, a fairly comprehensive account has been given of *Karma-Yōga* and the successive spiritual stages leading to final realization. The whole work is then rounded off with an account of *Jīvan-Mukti* (release in this very life) as described in Śaṅkara's classical works.

I hope that a fairly complete outline of Śaṅkara's Vedānta has been presented in this small work with all the special features calculated to mark it off from similar publications already in the field. The style is catechismal in form just to make the flow of argument continuous and easily intelligible.

I shall feel amply rewarded if some of my readers at least are satisfied with this humble attempt and are animated to continue their study in this direction.

XV. VIŚUDDHA-VEDĀNTA-PARIBHĀṢĀ

(Introduction)

Title of the work

This work is entitled “*Viśuddha-Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*” (Techniques of Pure Vedānta), mainly because it is the only attempt which specifically aims at presenting the technical terms and methods employed in explaining the central doctrine of Vedānta as sanctioned by Śaṅkara’s tradition in contradistinction to those in vogue in similar systems ancient or modern.

Hurdles in the path of Research Scholars and Pundits

Pure Vedānta has resisted all attempts of Scholars to define its limits or to label it as one or the other of the systems familiar to students of Western thought. It has been alternately dubbed scholasticism, theology, mysticism or metaphysics. And it has tempted some of the eastern thinkers and Pundits to subsume it under *Mīmāṃsā*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Yōga* or *Nyāya* or even Buddhist philosophy or else to treat it as a conglomeration of all these systems. The reason is very simple. Writers on pure Vedānta accept or adopt the terminology as well as certain doctrines of these schools while discussing on the empirical level, but strictly adhere to their main theme and method when they wish to teach the transcendental truth. Failure to keep this distinction intact, and to understand the techniques of pure Vedānta, has baffled many a research-scholar engaged in a serious attempt to understand Śaṅkara’s Vedānta.

Subject Matter of the Work

Accordingly, in this work, I have confined myself to the classical works of Śaṅkara, and to Sūtra-Bhāṣya in particular, in appealing to authorities for my views about the subject-matter, methods and terminology which can be safely assumed to belong to the pure system. The first and foremost unique doctrine of Śaṅkara-Vedānta is that taught by the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (Sve. 6-11). There is only one Witnessing Pure Consciousness in all beings, (एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च) and according to the Chāndōgya (6-8-7...) it is the one Reality and Self of the whole universe and of each and every one of the souls (ऐतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वं तत्सत्यं स आत्मा तत्त्वमसि). And the second is that all the apparent world is but a play of words while essentially it is the substrate Brahman (वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयम् - छा. ६-४-१). Basing himself on texts like these, Śaṅkara puts forward his definition of Avidyā (ignorance) as the mutual super-imposition of the Real Ātman and the unreal, the body, mind and the senses. He considers bodilessness (अशरीरत्व) alone as the pure nature of the Self, and declares that pleasure and pain can never touch the eternally bodiless Self (अशरीरं वाव सन्तं न प्रियाप्रिये स्पर्शतः - छा. ८-१२-१). It is the one purport of all the Upaniṣads to lead the earnest enquirer to the truth of the absolute identity of the apparently embodied Jīva or individual soul with the bodiless Universal Self.

Now, the Universal Self or Brahman is really devoid of all specific features and as such can never be objectified by words or thoughts, for these obtain only in

empirical life and are pre-eminently intended to express or conceive empirical facts. Naturally therefore, they can never reveal Reality which is their very Self. Vedānta, therefore, uses conventional words and concepts for inducing the enquirer to see that characteristics which the empirical mind naturally super-imposes on Reality, never actually pertain to it, and that they are essentially one with the Absolute Self, or Reality. That words cannot express, or that thoughts cannot throw light on Brahman is, however, no disadvantage either to the teacher or to the seeker of truth in Vedānta, for the basic teaching of Upaniṣads is to point out that Reality or Brahman is the real immediate ever-shining Self of all, and that it is through the light of its consciousness that everything else, inclusive of words and thoughts themselves become known.

It is for this reason that the method of अध्यारोपापवादन्याय, the method of deliberate ascription and its subsequent removal, is a unique tool in the hands of teachers of Vedānta. The maxim of the tradition is आध्यारोपापवादाभ्यां निष्प्रपञ्चं प्रपज्यते 'Reality which is absolutely devoid of all distinctions and differences is explained through deliberate imputation and negation.' It is this hall-mark that distinguishes Pure Vedānta from all other types of Absolutisms.

The nature of Avidyā, the antecedent reason and the effect of this Avidyā or ignorance on human life, have to be accurately and precisely known if one wishes to avoid confounding it with what the term denotes and connotes in other systems of Indian Philosophy. Mutual superimposition of the Real Self and the unreal not-self is *Avidyā*, which is due to the non-discrimination of the real nature of these two ; and its effect is *Vyavahāra*, to

think, speak, and act as though one were really the knower, actor and experiencer of the fruits of actions. It is this *Vyavahāra* which is mundane life or bondage from which Vidyā (right knowledge of the real nature of the Self and the not-self) releases the soul finally. How this final release ensues so soon as enlightenment dawns, how enlightenment results immediately from the knowledge of the text 'That thou art', how the exact significance of the terms 'that' and 'Thou' are to be ascertained and what are all acts of discipline necessary to qualify the seeker to attain enlightenment form the subject-matter of the present work.

I hope that a fairly complete account of the important techniques of Pure Vedānta is comprised in this little book. For a fuller account of the Unique Method of Vedānta the *Adhyarōpāpavāda-Nyāya*, the reader is referred to my work the "*Vedānta-Prakriya-Pratyabhijñā*" and greater details in technical terms and methods appear in my commentary on the *Samanvaya-Sūtra*.

XVI. NAIṢKARMYA-SIDDHI

(Introduction)

The Four Siddhis

There are four works with the word '*Siddhi*' affixed to their title, each claiming to represent the genuine Vedāntic system of Advaita taught in Upaniṣads. Of these *Brahma-Siddhi* of Maṇḍana Miśra represents an extinct school which taught that the repeated conjoined practice

(समुच्चय) of Karma or Vedic ritual and contemplation of Vedāntic knowledge, is necessary for the final dispelling of ignorance and realization of Advaita. *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi* of Sureśvara is the work now published. The third is *Iśṭa-Siddhi* of Vimuktātman which represents a type of post-Śaṅkara sub-school which revives a more ancient system positing a potential Avidyā or *Māyā* as the material cause of the manifold world. And *Advaita-Siddhi* of Madhusūdana is a work devoted to the defence of Advaita in general against the charges put forward by the *Nyāyamṛta* a polemical work of Mādhva Dvaita.

Who was Sureśvara ?

Sureśvarācārya is the author of the *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi*. The only historical facts that are ascertainable as indubitable are those recorded by the author himself. He was the immediate disciple of Śaṅkara (4-74) and wrote this work as commissioned by his Guru (1-3). He has also written the *Vārtikas* on *Taittirīya-Bhāṣya* (Tai. Bh. V. 3-90, 91) and on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Vṛtti* (or *Bhāṣya*) of Śaṅkara whose numerous disciples were far-famed and who dispelled the mental darkness of students of Vedānta from the most distant North to the most distant South (Br. Bh. V. 6-5-24, 25).

The legendary accounts of Sureśvara as detailed in the various *Śaṅkara-Digvijayas* are hardly worth believing. In the Saṃskṛta Introduction, I have stated my reasons for rejecting the identity of Maṇḍana and Sureśvara. The authors of the *Vijayas* are so recent that there is no reason whatever why one should attach any weight to these flights of fancy.

Apart from this, however, there is a more serious question to be considered. It will be observed that Sureśvara has written his precious *Vārtikas* only on the *Taittirīya* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Beyond referring to two *Sūtras* of *Bādarāyaṇa* in his prefatory note (संबन्धोक्ति) on 1-91, he does not make a single reference either to the *Sūtrās* or the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* even in his *magnum opus*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Bhāṣya Vārtika*. Why is this ? Is there any significance in this preference to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* ? Of course we need not attach any importance to the story given in Mādhava's account of the affair, that Sureśvara was prevented from writing a *Vārtika* or critical commentary on the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* owing to the jealousy of fellow-disciples. But there seems to be much more than is implied in Mādhava's account ; for, an occasional clash also is in evidence between the two Bhāṣyas on certain Vedāntic tenets :-

(१) त एते वाङ्मनःप्राणाः सर्व एव समाः तुल्याः व्याप्तिमन्तः ; यावत्प्राणिगोचरं साध्यात्माधिभूतं व्याप्य व्यवस्थिताः ; अत एवानन्ताः ॥ Br. Bh. 1-5-13, p. 702.¹

(२) सर्वगतस्य तु शरीरपरिमाणवृत्तिलाभो न विरुध्यते ॥ Br. Bh. 1-3-22, p. 640.

(३) 'त एते सर्व एव समाः सर्वेऽनन्ताः' इति श्रुते सर्वात्मकानि तावत् करणानि । सर्वात्मकप्रागसंश्रयाश्च । तेषाम् आध्यात्मिकाधिभौतिकपरिच्छेदः प्राणिकर्मज्ञानभावनानिमित्तः । अतस्तद्वशात् स्वभावतः सर्वगतानामनन्तानामपि प्राणानां कर्मज्ञानवासनानुरूपेणैव देहान्तरारम्भवशात् प्राणानां वृत्तिः सङ्कुचति विकसति च ॥ Br. Bh. 4-4-3, p. 912.

1. The page numbers refer to the 'दशोपनिषदः' (The Ten Upaniṣads) published by the Vāṇivilāsa Saṃskṛta Book Depot, Banaras.

Here it is stated in so many words that *Prāṇas* or organs of sense are all-pervading, and that they function in particular bodies of *Jīvas* in accordance with their *Karma* (action) and *Bhāvanā* (train of thought and feelings).

But in the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, we have an express repudiation of this doctrine :-

(1) एवं श्रुत्युक्ते देहान्तरप्रतिपत्तिप्रकारे सति याः पुरुषमतिप्रभवाः कल्पनाः । (१) व्यापिनां करणानाम् आत्मनश्च देहान्तरप्रतिपत्तौ कर्मवशात् वृत्तिलाभस्तत्र भवति ; (२) केवलस्यैवात्मनो वृत्तिलाभस्तत्र भवति, इत्येवमाद्याः सर्वा एवानादर्तव्याः । श्रुतिविरोधात् ॥ SBh. 3-1-1, p. 325.¹

(2) सर्वगतानामपि वृत्तिलाभः शरीरदेशे स्यादिति चेत् । न । वृत्तिमात्रस्य करणत्वोपपत्तेः । यदेव हि उपलब्धिसाधनम् - वृत्तिः, अन्यद्वा - तस्यैव नः करणत्वम्, संज्ञामात्रे विवादः - इति करणानां व्यापित्वकल्पना निरर्थिका । तस्मात् सूक्ष्माः परिच्छिन्नाश्च प्राणा इत्यध्यवस्यामः ॥ SBh. 2-4-7, p. 312.

It will be seen from the first excerpt that the doctrine of the sense-organs beginning to function in the new body, is despised here as the product of the human mind (पुरुषमतिप्रभवाः) along with some other teachings which are all considered by the author of the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* as opposed to the *Śruti* (श्रुतिविरोधात्), whereas in the second extract we have the express statement that the organs are both subtle and limited (सूक्ष्माः परिच्छिन्नाश्च) in opposition to the view of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Bhāṣya*. With regard to the idea that the organs function only in the particular

1. The page numbers refer to the Bhāṣya Text only of the *Brahma-Sūtras*, published by the Nirṇaya-Sāgara Press, Bombay.

body while they remain all-pervading, it is maintained that this supposition is needless, since the functioning alone might be taken to be the organ of sense itself. The remark in the *Upaniṣad-Bhāṣya* 'वृत्तिलाभो न विरुध्यते' (बृ.भा. १-३-२२) that 'it is no self-contradiction to hold that the sense only function in the particular body' would seem to imply that some Vedāntins regarded this view as opposed to the all-pervading nature of the Prāṇas, or that it was opposed to the Vedāntic tradition.

Are we to suppose in these circumstances that *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya* is from the pen of an author different from the writer of the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* ? We have to remember that this slight difference of opinion is no wise harmful to the main doctrine of Śaṅkara's Vedānta. It is not improbable that both the views regarding the Prāṇas were maintained by Vedāntins belonging to Śaṅkara's tradition, and that they were both recorded by that teacher. At the same time, it is impossible to ignore the scoffing observation made by the author of the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* that the other view is only a fancy of the human mind (पुरुषमतिप्रभवाः कल्पनाः). Surely one cannot be expected to deride oneself that way. It seems to be necessary to study both the Bhāṣyas more deeply in order to see if there are any more noticeable differences in style or thought.

I have noticed one peculiarity of style in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Bhāṣya* which is conspicuous by its absence in the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya*. Students of Śaṅkara-Bhāṣyas are quite familiar with a mannerism that obtrudes itself on the attention of the reader every now and then. The

Bhāṣyakāra is fond of expressing an idea in an aphoristic phrase or sentence and subsequently expanding its meaning in one or more sentences. But a special feature that is common only to the Bhāṣyas on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Taittirīya* is that short sentences expressing *prima facie* views ending with the particle चेत् (*if*) and closing explanatory sentences also with another चेत् (*if*), is to be met with in no Bhāṣya other than that on the two Upaniṣads. A few extracts may be adduced here in illustration of this :-

(1) गत्यैश्वर्यादिविरोधः इति चेत् । अथापि स्यात् - यद्यप्राप्यो मोक्षः, तदा गतिश्रुतीनां 'स एवधा', 'स यदि पितृलोककामः', 'स्त्रीभिर्वा यानैर्वा' इत्यादिश्रुतीनां च कोपः स्यात् इति चेत् ॥ Tai. Bh. 1-11, p. 277.

(2) कार्यान्तरमेव स्यात् इति चेत् । 'तदेवानुप्राविशत्' इति जीवात्मरूपं कार्यं नामरूपपरिणतं कार्यान्तरमेव आपद्यते इति चेत् । ॥ Tai. Bh. 2-6, p. 300.

(3) पिण्डादिव्यतिरेकेण मृदादेरसत्त्वात् अयुक्तम् इति चेत् । पिण्डादिपूर्वकार्योपमर्दे मृदादिकारणं नोपमृद्यते, घटादिकार्यान्तरेऽपि अनुवर्तते इत्येतदयुक्तम् ; पिण्डघटादि व्यतिरेकेण मृदादिकारणस्य अनुपलम्भात् इति चेत् । ॥ Br. Bh. 1-2-1, p. 614.

(4) अप्रसिद्धनामभिः संबोधनमयुक्तम् इति चेत् । सन्ति हि प्राणविषयाणि प्रसिद्धानि प्राणादिनामानि । तान्यपोह्य अप्रसिद्धैर्बृहत्त्वादिनामभिः संबोधनमयुक्तम् ; लौकिकन्यायापोहात् । तस्मात् भोक्तुरेव सतः प्राणस्य अप्रतिपत्तिः इति चेत् ॥ Br. Bh. 2-1-15, p. 724.

Both Upaniṣad-Bhāṣyas literally teem with such instances, but not even once do we see such a usage in the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* or any other of these Bhāṣya for that

matter.¹ The *Vārtikas* on both these Bhāṣyas have incorporated some Ślokas of *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi*, and both of them contain citations from *Upadeśa-Sāhasri*.² This fact may also induce one to conclude or at least conjecture that *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Bhāṣya* was perhaps written by some Śāṅkarācārya other than the author of the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya*. In the list of the succession of Gurus that occupied the pontifical seat in the Conjivaram mutt, there occurs the name of one 'Dhīra-Śāṅkara' or 'Abhinava-Śāṅkara' (the thirty-sixth Guru in the list) the account of whose life is said to correspond with that of Ādya-Śāṅkara as narrated in the *Śāṅkarendra Vijaya-Vilāsa* of Vākpāti-Bhaṭṭa of Kasmere. Leaving a margin for the differences in the various biographies of Śāṅkara, there is still a possibility that there may have flourished two different Śāṅkaras whose names are connected with *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Sūtra Bhāṣya*. Research scholars alone have to decide the question of their identity after a thorough study of the texts and the differences of teaching if any. Whether or not Sureśvara was the disciple of Sūtra-Bhāṣyakāra also will remain an open question till then.

What Does Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi Signify ?

Misled by the literal meaning of the word 'Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi' some have taken it to be a manual devoted to the condemnation of ritual as against Vedāntic knowledge. The term itself occurs in *Bhagavadgītā* (18-

1. There are, however, stray instances in the *Gītā-Bhāṣya* 6-1, 13-2 and *Praśna Bhāṣya* 6-2.

2. I have not discussed the authorship of the *Pancīkaraṇa-Vārtika* and *Mānasollāsa* for the obvious reason that scholars are not unanimous in ascribing these to Sureśvara.

49) where Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa says (नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां संन्यासेनाधिगच्छति) “One attains the highest ‘Naiṣkarmya Siddhi’ by means of Sannyāsa”. Nobody can accuse Gītā of being partial to the order of Sannyāsa as against ritual. Indeed in another place Sri Kṛṣṇa emphatically asserts that no one can attain *Naiṣkarmya* merely by non-performance of Karma and that no one can attain *Siddhi* through mere Sannyāsa (G. 3-4). Śaṅkara therefore, explains that *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi* is the perfect state of one who has transcended all karmas through the knowledge of Brahma-Ātman (the Highest Self), or immediate Release which is the same as reaching one’s own essential nature as the self above all action ; and that *Sannyāsa* is the right intuition of the Self or renunciation of all action as a consequence of that intuition.

As for Sureśvara himself, the term is a synonym, for right intuition (सम्यग्ज्ञानम्) arising from the teaching of the Vedāntic texts like ‘That thou art’ (तत्त्वमसि) which is the only means of wiping out ignorance (अज्ञान) of the Self. He not only sets forth this as the primary object of his undertaking the work in the prose Introduction at the commencement, but re-iterates the idea at the beginning of each chapter. That this realization inevitably takes the enlightened one beyond the sphere of action is placed beyond all doubt when the author says (4-1) that ‘this knowledge does not cast even a side-glance as engagement in or desistence from (न प्रवृत्तिं निवृत्तिं वा कटाक्षेणापि वीक्षते । 4-1) religious works’. The main theme of this short work is the interpretation of the Vedāntic Text ‘*Lat*

Tvam Asi’ (that thou art) as conducive to the extinction of *Avidyā* which is the basic cause of all evil and the sole impediment to the attainment of one’s own inherent blissful nature. It is this blotting out of ignorance by right knowledge of the teaching of the Vedāntic text that constitutes quintessence of all Vedāntic teaching, and induces the author to describe his work as अशेषवेदान्तसारसंग्रह ‘An epitome of the central teaching of all the Vedāntas’.

Ancient Schools Aiming at Advaita

Śaṅkara’s was not the only school that taught the ultimate unity of the individual self and Brahman or the Universal Self. Side by side with the traditional school of Śaṅkara there flourished many other schools that acquiesced in such unity. A number of such schools is referred to in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Bhāṣya-Vārtika*. I have enumerated some of them in my *Vedānta-Prakriya-Pratyabhijñā*. For the present, however, we shall take notice of only such systems as have been examined and refuted in *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi*.

(1) One school maintained that *Mukti* or final release can be attained by the observance of obligatory karmas to the exclusion of *Kāmya* and *Niṣiddha* karmas which entail the experience of pleasure and pain respectively in a future birth. This would result in *Mōkṣa* or release, in which state one would rest in his own true nature (स्वात्मन्यवस्थानम्).¹

1. The above view is advanced and refuted in *Taittirīya Bhāṣya* (Tai. Bh. p. 258), in *Gītā-Bhāṣya* (GBh. p. 290) and in *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* (SBh. 4-3-14, p. 499) also.

(2) There were some schools which admitted that there may be *Jñāna* also in conjunction with religious work as the means to *Mōkṣa*. '*Jñāna*' in this case is perhaps only meditation.

(3) In the course of the discussion of the *Samuccayavāda* (conjunction of knowledge and work) we have also the confutation of the system of *Bhartṛprapañca* who held that Brahman was both Dvaitic and Advaitic in Its nature (1-68 to 1-78).

(4) Another school is barely mentioned in passing. It supposed that by injunctions like 'आत्मेत्येवमुपासीत' and 'आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः', the seeker is directed to perform an action (नियोगोऽवसीयते). This system seems to be akin to that of the *Vṛttikāra* repeated in the second *Varṇaka* of the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* on 1-1-4. This view is summarily dismissed by a remark that *Ātma-Jñāna* is not *Puruṣatantra* (dependent on the will of a person). 1-88.

It should be noted that while the first chapter is mostly devoted to the refutation of rival schools partial to religious work as means to release, it also demonstrates that all action whether secular or Vedic is motivated by selfish desires springing from ignorance (1-29,30) and also that right knowledge of *Ātman* does not depend on any means of knowledge, for the nature of the unity of *Ātman* is itself of the nature of intuition (एकात्म्यस्य स्वत एवानुभवमात्रात्मकत्वात् 1-89) and self-established (स्वतःसिद्ध). Hence it can be realised only through the Vedāntic Text. These two points are developed in the subsequent chapters.

Three Ancient Interpretations of Tat-Tvam-Asi

There are three more ancient systems refuted in *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi*. Their distinguishing feature is that, unlike the other systems mentioned above, they all acquiesce in the necessity of reflection on the meaning of the texts like *Tat-tvam-asi* for effective eradication of Avidyā but do not agree with Śāṅkara's tradition when he insists that ignorance is removed once for all simultaneously with the dawn of knowledge of the meaning of the Vedāntic text. We shall, therefore, enumerate them in order before we close the discussion of ancient Advaitic schools.

(5) The first of these three Vṛttikāras holds that the immediate knowledge of the meaning of the Vedāntic text, cannot dispel ignorance, but only by the accumulated saturation of the mind with this thought by means of prolonged meditation (अहन्यहनि द्वाधीयसा कालेनोपासीनस्य सतो भावनोपचयात्) is it removed without a residue.

This doctrine of the injunction of Brahman by means of continued meditation is attributed to Brahmadatta by a certain commentator on *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi*, on what authority we are not told.

(6) The second school held that the knowledge arising from the text, can only be something which is a combination of inter-related concepts (संसर्गात्मकत्वात्), and, therefore, the intuition of the non-relational ineffable (अवाक्यार्थ) unity of Ātman can only accrue to the aspirant after a continued meditation of the original thought produced by listening to the Vedāntic Text (1-67).

This is one of the three *Prima facie* views refuted by Sureśvara in his *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Bhāṣya-Vārtika*. It is there attributed by Ānandajñāna to Maṇḍana and his followers (Br. V. Tī. 4-4-796). But in the *Ṭīka* on *Sambandha Vārtika* 797, the same Ānandajñāna ascribes this Jñānābhyāsa doctrine to Brahmadatta and others ! Moreover, we know that Maṇḍana as a matter of fact maintained that no injunction is necessary for the practice of this meditation, since there are instances in ordinary life of the repetition of knowledge giving rise to correct knowledge (दृष्टा च ज्ञानाभ्यासस्य सम्यग्ज्ञानप्रसादहेतुना लोके - *Brahma-Siddhi*, p. 154). Hence he could not have belonged to the school of Vedāntins referred to by Sureśvara in connection with the 'injunction' of meditation supposed to be implied in the Śruti 'विज्ञाय प्रज्ञां कुर्वीत' (after understanding the meaning of Vedānta a Brāhmaṇa should try to make his knowledge direct).

(7) Third and last view rejected by Sureśvara in the *Siddhi*, is that of *Prasaṅkhyāna*. While the *Prasaṅkhyāna* School agrees with the two other views enunciated above in insisting on an injunction which demands a repeated practice of meditation of the idea conveyed by the Vedāntic text 'Tat Tvam Asi', it is important to note that it is not a *Samuccayavadin*, for its distinctive doctrine is that the aspirant should renounce all karmas before undertaking the practice (3-126). This school also fears that even right knowledge produced by Vedāntic teaching may be sublated by incorrect knowledge (बलवदपि सम्यग्ज्ञानं सदप्रमाणोत्थेनासम्यग्ज्ञानेन बाध्यमानमुपलभामहे - 1-38). This is endorsed by *Upadeśa-Sāhasri* also when it makes the *Prasaṅkhyānavadin*

say ‘Surely sensuous perception and the deep rooted impression of duality, may do away with the knowledge now got from listening to the Śruti, and one may be lured outward by mental deficiencies (सदस्मीति च विज्ञानमक्षजो बाधते ध्रुवम् । शब्दोत्थं दृढसंस्कारो दोषैश्चाकृष्यते बहिः ॥ उप. १८-१३).

Scholars have not associated any particular name with this school of Vedāntins. Among the commentators on Sūtra-Bhāṣya, Vācaspati Mīśra may be considered to be a follower of a modified form of Prasaṅkhyānavāda in certain respects.¹

Sureśvara’s Interpretation of The Vedāntic Text

Preparatory Step

In perfect contrast with all other schools of Vedānta, Sureśvara’s holds that the Vedānta Vākya teaching the unity of Ātman, is the only means of obliterating all Avidyā. If one does not realize the meaning of *Tat-Tvam-Asi* (That thou art) even on having been taught by the Śruti, it is only because he has not understood the meaning of the word ‘thou’. Hence the second chapter is devoted to the way of discriminating its meaning (2-1). Two types of discrimination (अन्वयव्यतिरेकौ concomitance or continuance and exclusion), are serviceable in arriving at the entity denoted by the word ‘Thou’. The self as the *seer* continues, or persists throughout while the non-self as the *seen* is excluded at some stage; this is द्रष्टृदृश्यान्वयव्यतिरेक type, where द्रष्टृ (seer) is the knower and all the rest is दृश्य (the seen). After we have gone through this

1. Compare for instance his sub-commentary on Śaṅkara Bhāṣya (4-1-2) where he evidently differs from the former.

first stage of discrimination (1-19 to 2-57), we take up the next one, viz., the self as witness and the rest as the witnessed (2-58 to 2-83) subject to appearance and disappearance (3-54). This two-fold discrimination, however, as the author warns (2-97) must be taken to last only so long as the nature of the self is not realized. And this realization dawns only when the teaching of the text 'That thou art' is intuited.

Sureśvara's Interpretation of the Vedāntic Text

The Equation of the Terms in the Proposition

Sureśvara draws our attention to three steps (3-3) in the interpretation of the proposition which equates 'Thou' with 'That'.

(1) The terms are in apposition (सामानाधिकरण्यम्).

(2) The selves denoted by them qualify one another ; that is to say, they have to be understood in such a way that neither affects the nature of the other (विशेषणविशेष्यता). And

(3) Therefore, the extraneous meanings that may be involved in the two terms, are to be taken out so that the whole proposition may represent a real identity (लक्ष्यलक्षणभावः).

It is clear that on ascertaining the true meaning of 'thou' by the method of continuance and exclusion already explained at length, the import of the proposition culminates in inducing the intuition of the unity of both the selves and we realize that there is no contradiction whatever, when we see that the individual self denoted by 'thou' is really beyond all defects of *Samsāra* and that Brahman denoted by 'That' is really the very self imme-

diately present (3-10). Only, the indicatory meaning of the term 'thou' is to be taken, just as we do when we say that the snake is really the rope for which it was mistaken (3-27).

The sum and substance of the process of interpretation is this : The term 'thou' is taken to indicate the witnessing Self to the exclusion of appearances that may be implied by the express and primary meaning. And the term 'That' is also taken to indicate the inmost Self only to the exclusion of all other possible meanings that may be implied by that word (3-23, 24). The reason for this procedure is the collocation of the terms and the mutual relation of the entities that are meant. The steps of interpretation and the exact principles involved, have been explained at great length in the course of the commentary¹ and the student is recommended to go through the details in order to understand this part of exposition with the care which it deserves.

The Proposition Tat-Tvam-Asi

'*Tat-tvam-asi*' as we all know is only a representative of the class of propositions called *Mahā-Vākyas* (grand propositions) which convey the idea of identity of the individual self and the Supreme Self. The name itself never occurs either in Sureśvara's work or in Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣyas*. They are so named probably because Advaitins think that they contain the main purport of all Upaniṣadic teaching, to wit, the identity of the individual and the Absolute Self. It is surprising that Sureśvara follows *Upadeśa-Sāhasri* exclusively in choosing his method of interpreting these proposi-

1. Refers to *Kleśāpahāriṇi*, an elaborate and beautiful commentary, to which the present is the introduction.

tions, a method to be seen in no other classical work ascribed to Śaṅkara. Neither in the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* nor even in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya* do we find any approximation to the elaborate manner he has adopted in explaining the import of these Vedāntic Texts. Of course the intrinsic value of the interpretation lies in the appeal made to the universal intuition of the Self, and the two specific types of *Anvaya* and *Vyatireka* adopted in the Upaniṣads. Why the empirical mode of reasoning (3-47 to 50) or even the Vedic reasoning of अन्वयव्यतिरेक (continuance and exclusion) for that matter (3-57, 113; 4-15, 16) is not capable of delivering the goods with regard to the knowledge or intuition of the unity of the Self, has been explained in *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi* in the most sublime manner.

Vidyā And Avidyā

Vidyā arising from the understanding of the meaning of the Vedāntic text and *Avidyā* to be eradicated by it, are quite unlike empirical knowledge and error. While *Avidyā* is the sole cause of all evil and *Vidyā* is the only means of destroying it, this distinction of ignorance and its sublation, is only a device for the purpose of teaching. From the highest point of view, there is neither ignorance to be burnt up nor knowledge that has got to be newly acquired. The destruction of ignorance by knowledge is no event in time or place, for the latter are merely the product of ignorance (4-58).

There is a seeming point of divergence between Śaṅkara and Sureśvara with regard to the emphasis to be laid on the privative aspect of *Avidyā* as contrasted with its projective aspect. Sometimes the author's phraseology

is likely to be mistaken to be in favour of the theory of the *Mūlavidyā* or positive ontological 'basic ignorance' so prominently brought forward by *Pañca-pādika* and other Post-Śaṅkara Advaitins. It is to explain all such apparent discrepancies and elucidate all obscurities in the *Siddhi* that I have ventured to attempt a new commentary on the work. I would fain hope that the title *Kleśāpahāriṇī* (remover of all difficulties) is no mere boast. I have tried to justify my claim in this respect by appealing to universal intuition as well as to the *Vārtika* and *Upadeśa-Sāhasri* whenever I have had to make a depārture from the older commentary in clarifying the knotty points of the original.

Conclusion

Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi occupies an important place among the Vedāntic works professing to explain Śaṅkara's teaching. While *Pañca-pādika* and *Bhāmatī* try to interpret Śaṅkara's system each in its own way, Sureśvara's work has the advantage of being the production of an immediate desciple of Śaṅkara, and presents the central doctrine of the latter's Vedānta in all its essential aspects and contrasts it with contemporary systems. In the course of the discussion, it is worthy of note that he refers to (1) the self-established nature of Ātman as unchanging Pure Consciousness; (2) ignorance as the only obstacle to the knowledge of Ātman; (3) the mutual super-imposition of the self and the non-self in consequence of ignorance only; (4) the distinction of the means of right knowledge and their objects, no less than the distinction of action, means of action, and the result of action, as merly the figment of Avidyā or ignorance; (5) the enquiry into the

nature of Brahman (ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा) as a Śāstra distinct and different from the enquiry into the nature of religious works (धर्मजिज्ञासा) ; (6) the Vedāntic texts like *Tat-tvam-asi* being the means of right knowledge solely because of their efficiency in removing ignorance ; and (7) absence of anything to be done for one who has gained the supra-rational intuition of the self understanding through the right meaning of the texts. The ruggedness of style and the occasional grammatical and metrical difficulties that crop up, can never deter a student of genuine Vedāntic seeking for immediate intuition of Reality from appreciating the beauty of this rare brilliance of a Vedāntic compendium.

XVII. MĀṆḌŪKYA RAHASYA VIVṚTIḤ

(Introduction)

Section One

The Orthodox View Of Gauḍapāda

1. Gauḍapāda, A Problem To Scholars

Gauḍapāda, the author of the Kārikās on Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, has proved to be a veritable riddle of the sphinx to research scholars. Was there an author of that name in existence at all ? Presuming that he did exist, what was his date ? What were his works besides the Kārikās ? Is Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad so called, also to be counted among them ? What is the relation between the Upaniṣad and the four books embodying the Kārikās ?

Are these books themselves related to one another as chapters of one work, or are they independent treatises ? Does the Upaniṣad cover any portion of the Kārikās also ? Further, is the fourth chapter a work on Vedānta at all ? How far is it indebted to Mahāyānic works ? Has Gauḍapāda any prior Vedāntins of this tradition to back him, or has he struck a new path altogether of his own ? Is the commentator on the Kārikās identical with the commentator on the Brahma-Sūtras ? How far has he correctly represented Gauḍapāda's views ? Do Śaṅkarācārya of the Sūtra Bhāṣya and other subsequent Vedāntins subscribe to all his teachings ? Such are some of the problems that have exercised the best brains engaged in oriental studies.

In my Saṃskṛta commentary intended for the orthodox section of the earnest students of Advaita Vedānta, who have no misgivings whatever about most of these matters, I have generally proceeded on the principle that unless and until the universally accepted tradition has been finally proved to be baseless, there is no reason to trouble ourselves about the various incompatible opinions of theorists, or even about the opposing views of recent adverse critics of Advaita from among the mutually different schools of Vedānta. All the same, I propose to state here very briefly some of the reasons which have weighed with me in believing in the authenticity of Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad as well as the consistent inter-relation of the four chapters forming an organic whole in the shape of an exposition by Gauḍapāda of the philosophy of that Upaniṣad. I shall also try to examine some of the adverse criticisms against the orthodox view of Gauḍapāda,

and place before the reader my own conclusions according to the light I have received.

2. The Māṇḍūkya Is A Genuine Upaniṣad

Śaṅkara opens his commentary with the remark that he is going to comment upon this work of four chapters (प्रकरण-चतुष्टयम्) beginning with “This syllable Om”. The interpretation of this sentence, commonly received, is that the Ācārya proposes to write a commentary on Gauḍapāda’s work consisting of four parts, and that the work itself is an explanation of the Upaniṣad beginning with “This syllable Om” (ओमित्येतदक्षरम्). The ambiguous wording of the sentence, however, (वेदान्तार्थसारसंग्रहभूतमिदं प्रकरणचतुष्टय-मोमित्येतदक्षरमित्याद्याश्चरन्ते Mā. Bh. p. 5) easily lends itself to being intepreted to mean that the prose portion is also included as an integral part of the work. And Deussen in his *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* (p. 30), has actually explained it that way, and in support of this supposition, he says that it squares with the fact that the Māṇḍūkya is not quoted either in the *Brahma-Sūtra* or the Bhāṣya thereon. Fortunately, Sri Sureśvarācārya, a direct disciple of Śaṅkarācārya, has left us a verse in his *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Vārtika* which settles the question once for all.

एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभावाप्ययौ । माण्डूकेयश्रुतिवच इति स्पष्टमधीयते ॥ - (बृ.वा. ३-८-२६)

This should suffice to set aside the conjecture of Professor Vidhuśekhara Bhaṭṭācārya (AS p. xli) that the Māṇḍūkya must be posterior to Kārikās, from which as well as some older Upaniṣads these prose passages must have been compiled. It now becomes incumbent on the

scholars who doubt the canonical nature of the Upaniṣad to adduce any reasons compelling us to believe in such modern guesses in preference to the consensus of opinion held by Vedāntins of all schools from very early times.

3. Gaudapāda Is The Author Of Kārikās

It is well-known that Śaṅkara in his *Sūtra Bhāṣya* quotes two Kārikās from this work (GK 1-16 and 3-15) and prefāces the quotation in each case with the significant statement that it is the declaration of those who know the right tradition of Vedānta (तथा च संप्रदायविदो वदन्ति S. Bh 1-4-14 ; अत्रोक्तं संप्रदायवृद्धिराचार्यैः S.Bh. 2-1-9) This obviously militates against the claim of the Dvaitins that the first chapter is of superhuman origin. Of course this cannot vouch for Gaudapāda's authorship of the Kārikās ; but we are on surer ground when we come down to Sureśvarācārya's *Naiṣkarmya Siddhi*. The following is an extract from that work for the information of such as may not feel quite satisfied with Śaṅkara's indirect references :

अस्यार्थस्य द्रढिम्न उदाहरणम् -

कार्यकारणबद्धौ ताविष्येते विश्वतैजसौ । प्राज्ञः कारणबद्धस्तु द्वौ तौ तुयें न सिध्यतः ॥

अन्यथागृह्णतः स्वप्नो निद्रा तत्त्वमजानतः । विपर्यासे तयोः क्षीणे तुरीयं पदमश्नुते ॥

तथा भगवत्पादीयमुदाहरणम् -

सुषुप्ताख्यं तमोऽज्ञानं बीजं स्वप्नप्रबोधयोः । आत्मबोधप्रदग्धं स्याद् बीजं दग्धं यथाभवम् ॥

एवं गौडैर्द्राविडैर्नः पूज्यैरयमर्थः प्रकाशितः । अज्ञानमात्रोपाधि-
स्सन्नहमादिदृगीश्वरः ॥

- (नै. सि. ४-४१, ४२, ४३, ४४)

Here Sureśvara being anxious to support his position from unimpeachable authorities, quotes both his preceptor Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda with reverence (नः पूज्यैः).

Scepticism is incurable. Scholars are not wanting who hesitate to believe that Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara are actually meant here, for the plurals 'Gauḍas' and 'Drāvidas' yield to other interpretations also. I shall therefore adduce a clincher from this self-same Sureśvara's *Bṛhadāranyaka Bhāṣya Vārtika* :

निःशेषवेदसिद्धान्तविद्वद्भिरपि भाषितम् । गौडाचार्यैरिदं वस्तु यथास्माभिः
प्रपञ्चितम् ॥ - (२-१-३८६)

मृल्लोहविस्फुलिङ्गाद्यैः सृष्टिर्या चोदितान्यथा । उपायः सोऽवतारय
नास्ति भेदः कथंचन ॥ - (२-१-३८७)

श्लोकांश्च गौडपादादेर्यथोक्तार्थस्य साक्षिणः । अधीयतेऽत्र यत्नेन संप्रदायविदः
स्वयम् ॥ - (४-४-८८६)

तत्त्वमाध्यात्मिकं दृष्ट्वा तत्त्वं दृष्ट्वा तु बाह्यतः । तत्त्वीभूतस्तदारामः तत्त्वादप्रच्युतो
भवेत् ॥ - (४-४-८८७)

यदा न लीयते चित्तं न च विक्षिप्यते पुनः । अनिङ्गनमनाभासं निष्पन्नं
ब्रह्म तत्तदा ॥ - (४-४-८८८)

This is crystal clear. The first thing that strikes us here is that the very Ślōka (GK 3-15) Śaṅkara has quoted in his *Sūtra Bhāṣya*, has been endorsed by Sureśvara as

a production of Gauḍapāda. He likewise cites two more Kārikās (GK 2-38 and 3-46) ascribing them expressly to Gauḍapāda. In these circumstances there can be little doubt that when he quotes another Ślōka from the first chapter विश्वो हि स्थूलभुज्जित्यं तैजसः प्रविविक्तभुक् । आनन्दभुक्तया प्राज्ञ इति चागमशासनम् ॥ (Br. V. 1-4-774) in the same Vārtika, he regarded it as belonging to Gauḍapāda's *Āgama Prakaraṇa*.

4. The Four Chapters Do Form A Compact Whole

Now for the unity of Gauḍapāda's work. Even while conceding that the Prakaraṇas are the work of one and the same author, some scholars have doubted their coherency. Professor Vidhuśekhara Bhaṭṭācārya, in particular, is certain "that these four Books are four independent treatises and are put together in a volume under the title of the *Āgamaśāstra*". (AS p. lvii). This conclusion is drawn by him mainly from *a priori* considerations such as the opinion of Madhva and other Ācāryas who think that the first chapter forms part of the Upaniṣad which is complete in itself, and the want of interdependence between the so-called chapters in respect of their subject-matter.

Now in view of Sureśvara's indubitable testimony for Gauḍapāda's authorship of the first chapter no less than that of the others, the Upaniṣadic theory of the first chapter falls to the ground. The theory becomes weaker, if possible, from the circumstance that its propounders are only a recent sect of Vedāntins who were not in existence during the time of Śaṅkara and *a fortiori* of Gauḍapāda. My voucher for this hypothesis is a statement from Śaṅkara's *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya* : सर्वोपनिषत्सु हि विज्ञानात्मनः

परमात्मना एकत्वप्रत्ययो विधीयत इति अविप्रतिपत्तिः सर्वेषामुपनिषद्वादिनाम् ।
(Br. Bh. 2-1-20) Śaṅkara here takes it for an indisputable fact that there is no disagreement among the followers of Upaniṣads as to the purport of those sacred writings being to set forth the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self.

It is now for the supporters of the Upaniṣadic theory, therefore, to satisfy orientalisists of the existence of the schism of Vedāntins into Advaitins and Dvaitins at the time of, or even before, Śaṅkara. And, on the other hand, it goes without saying that speculations about the authorship or the time of compilation of the so-called prose-portion, will have to be laid at rest till positive evidence is forthcoming that Sureśvara was wrong in treating, or that he wilfully misrepresented, the Māṇḍūkya to be a Śruti.

As for the alleged want of inter-relation between the chapters, I fear that it is only a matter of opinion since Śaṅkara and his followers hold an opposite view. I am perfectly aware that Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya feels disappointed about the introductory remarks made at the commencement of each chapter by Śaṅkara whom the learned scholar is loath to identify with the great Śaṅkara of the Sūtra Bhāṣya solely, again, on *a priori* grounds. But I submit, with all humility, that Śaṅkara's interpretations are not altogether as unsatisfactory as they are made to look. For details in this matter, I beg of my readers to refer to the Saṃskṛta commentary now published, where a sustained effort is made to bring out the unity of the whole teaching as well as to show how the several chapters act in perfect unison.

As for the status of Śaṅkara as a commentator on the Māṇḍūkya, the first thing that is to be noted is that he reverently refers to Gauḍapāda as his grand-preceptor (परमगुरुमुम्) in his penultimate verse at the end of his work. His recognition of the four pādas (literally four parts) or aspects of Ātman as described in the Māṇḍūkya, has been endorsed by implication by the commentator on the Bṛihadāraṇyaka, who makes use of the same names Vaiśvānara, Taijasa, Prāṇa (for Prājña), and Tūriya (Br. Bh. 4-2-2,3,4) even when that terminology is conspicuous by its absence in the body of that Upaniṣad. The latter commentator has been called by Sureśvara 'that brilliant Sun Śaṅkara' (शङ्करभानवे Br. V. p. 2073) and respected as his personal Guru (मद्गुरुम्, अस्मद्गुरुरेव Br. V. pp. 2072, 2073). Again, Sureśvara in his *Naiṣkarmya Siddhi* claims to have devoutly served at the feet of Śaṅkara. (श्रीमच्छङ्करपादपद्मयुगलम् संसेव्य Nai. 4-4) And when it is recollected that the same Sureśvara styles Śaṅkara as Bhagavatpūjyapāda (भगवत्पूज्यपादैश्च Nai. 4-19) while quoting certain verses from *Upadeśa Sāhasri* whose verses figure largely in the *Vārtika* also, there seems to be every justification for supposing that the commentator on the Māṇḍūkya, is none else but the famous Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda, author of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya* as well as of *Upadeśa Sāhasri*, the immediate spiritual preceptor of Sureśvara and the grand-disciple of Gauḍapāda. All this is quite in consonance with the Advaitic tradition. Is it now too much to believe that he who thus owes his allegiance to Gauḍapāda and is so proximately and intimately connected with the tradition, has a better claim to understand the teachings of

that author than modern scholars who can entertain only vague speculations about them ?

5. The Title Of Gauḍapāda's Work

This brings us to the consideration of what actually Gauḍapāda teaches in his work. And for this purpose, it is clear that one should naturally go to the work itself before saturating one's mind with ideas current about it. I must start, however, by remarking that Gauḍapāda's work has not been known traditionally by the name of *Āgama Śāstra* from its very inception as alleged by Professor Bhaṭṭācārya. We do not find the work called by that name by Śaṅkara, who merely calls it a work of four monographs (प्रकरणचतुष्टयम्), or by any other reputed writer on Vedānta for that matter. This title is not uniformly incorporated in all the colophons as Bhaṭṭācārya himself testifies (pp. 231, 234, 236, and 244 of *Āgama Śāstra*). This name must have come into vogue, however, as time went on, and by the time of Ānandagiri the glossator on Śaṅkara, it must have been familiar at least to some Vedāntins. For we find this observation in his Tīkā संप्रति ग्रन्थप्रणयनप्रयोजनप्रदर्शनपूर्वकं परमगुरुन् आगमशास्त्रस्य व्याख्यातस्य प्रणेतृत्वेन व्यवस्थितान् प्रणमति "He now points out the object of having undertaken this work, and makes obeisance to his grand-preceptor the well known author of the *Āgama Śāstra*" (Mā. Bh. Tī. p. 223). It is very necessary to bear this preliminary point in mind because, as we shall presently see, the word '*Āgama*' has a specific meaning in connection with the name of the first chapter of Gauḍapāda's work.

6. The Subject-Matter Of The Work

It is just possible, though by no means certain, that whoever first brought the name of 'Āgama Śāstra' into currency, had in mind the importance of the first chapter which contains in a nut-shell all that has to be said about the central doctrine of Vedānta. The whole work of Gauḍapāda is, traditionally speaking, an exposition of the philosophy of Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad. We have therefore, to do here with Ātman who is the *Caturtha*, the fourth, both as beyond the three-fold states (Mantra 7) and the three-fold expressive letters composing the syllable Om (Mantra 12).

Now the first chapter is primarily meant to set forth the *Āgama* or the right traditional way of revealing this Ātman (ओङ्कारनिर्णयाय प्रथमं प्रकरणमागमप्रधानमात्मतत्त्वप्रतिपत्त्युपायभूतम् Mā. Bh. p. 8). It is not an authority to be relied upon, for we find nothing of the kind stated anywhere in the chapter. Briefly speaking, it points to Ātman or reality as beyond all speech and, presumably, mind also. In short, it tells us how both the subjective and the objective ultimately merge into one Absolute called indifferently as Ātman or Om, the Fourth.

The second and third chapters are for the purpose of elucidating this basic teaching. The identity of waking and dream Ātmans - hinted at in the Śruti by the two epithets (सप्ताङ्गः, एकोनविंशतिमुखः) 'seven-organed' and 'ninteen-faced' (Mantras 2 and 3) and in the Āgama Prakaraṇa by two epithets (कार्यकारणबद्धौ) 'bound by cause and effect' and (स्वप्ननिद्रायुतावाद्यौ) 'having both sleep and dream' - is clarified in the second chapter. And the idea

of Māyic causality hinted at in the Śruti (प्रभावाप्ययौ हि भूतानाम् Mantra 6) and dogmatically stated in the Āgama chapter (स्वप्नमायासरूपेति) (GK 1-7) is elaborated in the third chapter. The unborn *Turīya* or the Fourth, of course, is taught in all the three chapters, in the first by an examination of the three states अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नम् (GK 1-16), in the second indirectly pointing to it as the basis of all illusory phenomenon (कल्पयत्यात्मनाऽऽत्मानम् GK 2-12) and in the third by clarifying how all appearance is an illusory creation or rather manifestation, and how the changeless, sleepless, dreamless one beyond name and form (अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमनामकमरूपकम् GK 3-36) is the only Reality. The fourth chapter contains an indirect proof of this Vedāntic doctrine and the final conclusion briefly recapitulating all that has been taught in the previous chapters.

I have given here the barest outline of the contents of the several chapters in the briefest manner possible. For a detailed account of the Vedāntic dialectic of the three states and elaboration of the teaching of Gauḍapāda, the reader is referred to the Saṃskṛta Introduction and the body of the commentary itself.

Section Two

Evolution Of The Advaitic Absolutism

1. Vedānta And Vijñānavāda

We now arrive at a very intricate problem. Gauḍapāda's work, especially the fourth chapter of it, seems

with technical terms, turns of expression and even verbatim quotations which do not appear to be in keeping with Vedānta, while they quite fit in with Buddhistic thought. How is this phenomenon to be explained ? Are we to suppose that the writer of the chapter is strongly influenced by Buddhistic doctrines or was himself a Vedāntin quite sympathetic towards Buddhism ? The Question first arrested my attention when Prof. S.N. Dāsgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy* came to my hands,¹ and has puzzled me ever since.

Two eminent scholars in India have worked at the problem from different angles of vision and have arrived at opposite conclusions, both worthy of consideration in connection with the ascertainment of the import of the chapter in question. Professor Vidhuśekhara Bhaṭṭācārya, who has made an extensive study of Vedānta and, what is more important, of the original sources of Buddhistic works, is convinced that Gauḍapāda is the originator of what he calls the Vedāntic school of Vijñānavāda as contrasted with that of the Buddhists (AS. Intro. p. lxxxii) and that Gauḍapāda's Brahman and the *Citta* in *Vijñāpti mātrata* of the Yōgācāras, are in fact the same thing with only one difference that while the former is *Nitya* the latter is *Dhruva* continuous, and never coming to an end. (AS Intro. p.cxlii). He, therefore, concludes that in the fourth Book "he (Gauḍapāda) expresses his approval on

1. The Professor goes so far as to postulate that Gauḍapāda "was possibly himself a Buddhist." (HIP Vol I ch. X p. 423). On page 429 of his work, we find this remark : "It is so obvious that these doctrines are borrowed from Mādhyamika doctrines as found in the *Nāgārjuna's Kārikās* and the Vijñānavāda doctrines as found in *Lankāvatāra*, that it is needless to attempt to prove it."

behalf of his school regarding *Ajāti*¹ as declared by the Advayas or Buddhists, saying that he does not dispute with them on this point'' (AS Intro. p. cxlii). This is the gist of what the learned professor has stated at length in his introduction to *Āgama Śāstra* (AS Intro. pp. cxxxi to cxliv).

It is evident that the professor has adopted altogether a new line of thought completely deviating from the orthodox way of interpretation. I very much regret that I have had to differ from a learned scholar of his standing on each and every one of the points mentioned above, as I find nothing unjustifiable in following the current creed in this matter. Of course, in a case of such serious divergence of opinion, each reader has to judge for himself. The Professor's annotation on Gauḍapāda is available both in English and Saṃskṛta, and here is my own humble attempt to state the case of the traditional interpretation. Judgment has to be passed by impartial critics after a careful sifting of all the facts relevant to the question.

For my part, in any case, I feel it difficult to conceive how, on this view, Śaṅkara, Sureśvara as well as a host of other brilliant Advaitic minds, have thought it consistent to demonstrate a sustained hostility to Vijñānavāda and at the same time to venerate Gauḍapāda, supposedly an avowed Vijñānavādin, as one who knows the right tradition of Vedāntic teaching.

And is it true that Gauḍapāda has actually expressed his approval of *Ajāti* 'as declared by the Buddhists'? And

1. The reader will note that 'Ajāti' for Gauḍapāda is not merely non-origination, as it is for the Buddhist, but that which has no origination. (Vide GK 3-2 and Śaṅkara's Commentary thereon.)

does he really say that he 'does not dispute with them on this point'? The Professor's answer is in the affirmative. Here are the Ślōkas on which he bases his revolutionary argument :

भूतस्य जातिमिच्छन्ति वादिनः केचिदेव हि ।

अभूतस्यापरे धीरा विवदन्तः परस्परम् ॥

भूतं न जायते किञ्चिदभूतं नैव जायते ।

विवदन्तो द्वया ह्येवमजातिं ख्यापयन्ति ते ॥

ख्याप्यमानामजातिं तैरनुमोदामहे वयम् ।

विवदामो न तैः सार्धमविवादं निबोधत ॥ (GK 4-3, 4-5)

First of all, Professor Bhaṭṭācārya proposes an emendation in the usual reading of the second Ślōka. He suggests that the विवदन्तोऽद्वयाः found in a very few editions, is to be preferred to the reading विवदन्तो द्वयाः recognized by Śaṅkara and others. And why ? Because it is the only reading 'that can reasonably be accepted'. That is to say, just because it suits his theory that Gauḍapāda approved Buddhistic doctrines ? Is that not verily to cut the foot to fit the shoe ?

It will be observed that in each of the above three Ślōkas a form of the verb विवद् is used. In the first it is विवदन्तः translated by our Professor into 'they dispute with each other'. In the third Kārika it is विवदामो न तैः सार्धम् translated into 'we do not dispute with them'. And in the second it is विवदन्तोऽद्वयाः according to his emendation ; but this time it is translated into 'the followers of the doctrine of Advaya, assert absolute non-becoming (Ajāti)'. One

will be naturally prompted to ask “But why this invidious distinction, though these words are all in the same context ? Why should we not conformably render this verb also ‘Dispute with each other’ ?” The answer is not far to seek. Evidently because we do not want the *Advayas* to dispute with each other !

A word about the reading अद्वयाः which has been thus uncomfortably forced into the verse, just for accommodating a cherished theory. What does the term mean ? Bhaṭṭācārya explains that it is in fact identical with *Advayavādin*, one of the names for the Buddha. We are not told how the former term does duty for the latter. We shall, however, let it pass. What is more important for us is that in this connection a special distinction is made between ‘*Advaitavāda*’ and ‘*Advayavāda*’. While the former literally means the theory of non-difference, i.e. the non-difference between or identity of (according to the school of S.) Jīva and Brahman, the latter means the theory of non-two, i.e. neither of the two extreme views (AS p. 102). But where is the voucher for this discrimination ? It is certainly not in Gauḍapāda’s work where the two terms are treated as synonymous, and our Professor, who is most resourceful in matters of Buddhistic usage of such words, is strangely reticent in this particular case.

Before closing this examination, necessarily brief, of the Vedāntic Vijñānavāda theory, bolstered up with so much clap-trap of lengthy quotations and long-drawn arguments, I shall refer to one more such unauthenticated distinction which the learned critic has attempted. He says in his introduction to the Āgama Śāstra (AS Intro. cxlii) that Gauḍapāda’s Brahman and the *Citta* in *Vijñaptimātrata*

of the Yōgācāras, are in fact the same thing with only one difference that while the former is *Nitya* the latter is *Dhruva*. But observing that Gauḍapāda himself betrays him by using the two words indiscriminately (GK 4-11 and 12), he modifies this proposition in his Saṃskṛta edition of the work and says that, 'it must be borne in mind that in the older Upaniṣads Ātman is found to be described as *Nitya* only and not *Dhruva*' (इदं चावगन्तव्यं प्राचीनासूपनिषत्सु आत्मा नित्य इत्येव दृश्यते न पुनर्ध्रुव इति ॥ आ. शा. वृ. p. 111) But on closer examination this contention also is found to fizzle out, for even the oldest of Upaniṣads fails to come to his rescue. In the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad we find this passage : विरजः पर आकाशादज आत्मा महान् ध्रुवः (Br. 4-4-20).

In short, I am afraid that the theory of the Vedāntic Vijñānavāda is no more than a make-shift to explain away the extraordinary Buddhistic flavour of Gauḍapāda Kārikās. The attempt to interpret Gauḍapāda on that basis is beset with more insuperable difficulties than it promises to overcome.

2. The Alleged Influence Of The Mādhyamika On Vedānta

Professor T. R. V. Mūrti, the author of *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, is the second of the two scholars I have alluded to above. He views the matter from a totally different standpoint. He hesitates to decide the question once for all and suspects 'a possible influence of the Mādhyamika on the development of Vedānta' (CPB p. 109), and strengthens his opinion by remarking that "We have undeniable evidence of Mādhyamika and

Yōgācāra influence in the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikās*” (Ibid. p. 113). With regard to the first three chapters, however, he notes that “nothing is said to which any orthodox Vedāntin could take exception as regards language and logical content”. (Ibid. p. 114). At the same time he observes that “No Vedānta writer has quoted from the fourth chapter, while verses are quoted from the first three. Bhāvaviveka and Śāntarakṣita have also quoted in their exposition of Aupaniṣada school from this part alone”. (Ibid. p. 114).¹ The professor depends almost entirely on Professor. V. Bhaṭṭācārya for the interpretation of Book IV. His own surmise is that “It can be considered as an attempt to synthesise the two schools of Mahāyāna. On internal evidence alone, we may treat the *Alāta Śānti Prakaraṇa* of the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikas* as an independent work, written most probably by a Buddhist”. (Ibid. 115) Having cut the Gordian Knot in this manner, the professor proceeds to formulate his final position thus : “It is our contention that there could not be acceptance of any doctrinal content by either side from the other, as each had a totally different background of tradition and conception of reality..... Consistent with the above contention, we can only expect the Vedāntin to have profited by the technique or method of the Mādhyamika” (Ibid. p. 116).

1. This statement is made on the authority of Prof. V. Bhaṭṭācārya who shows at length how Bhāvaviveka (cir. 500-550 A.D.), Śāntarakṣita (705-762 A.D.), and his disciple Kamalaśīla, have all quoted from Gaudapāda. Seeing that the latter himself draws upon Nāgārjuna (200 A.D.), his discipile Āryadeva and Maitreyanātha or Asaṅga (400 A.D.), that professor concludes that Gaudapāda's date naturally falls in the 5th. Century. A. D.

We may readily concur with the Professor when he says that Gauḍapāda has profited by the technique or even the method of the Mādhyamika. But the question is, to what extent exactly did either of these items profit that writer ? Was he wholly indebted to the Buddhist ? What were the circumstances that drove this profound thinker on Vedānta to seek assistance from sources professedly of an alien tradition ? Was there nothing in his own tradition to look to in this matter ? These questions, I think, must be answered satisfactorily first, before we jump to conclusions based mostly on conjectures.

3. Pre-Gauḍapāda Vedānta As The Precursor Of Absolutism

Prof. Mūrti admits that “if the independence of the Books, especially of Book IV, were accepted, it alters our contention with regard to the alleged borrowing. We have no direct textual evidence for that. We can only presume and conjecture from the acknowledged priority of the Mādhyamika and Yōgācāra Advaya-vāda to the Advaita of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara and from the absence of such a trend in their predecessors”. (CPB p. 115-116). We have seen that we could not agree with those who consider all the four Books to be independent treatises. The first three chapters may be left out of consideration for our present purpose since the Professor is convinced that they are Vedāntic. It is only on the evidence of Book IV, therefore, that we have to examine the nature and extent of the Mādhyamika influence on Gauḍapāda. Whether or not it is Gauḍapāda’s work, is just the moot point here. The conjecture that it may be the work of a Buddhist we shall pass over, for we have no positive evidence for that

except that no Vedāntic writer is found to have quoted from it. But an argument from silence of this nature cuts both ways, for no Buddhist writer has appealed to or even made a passing reference to it as a Buddhistic work either. That Gauḍapāda has discussed nothing directly of the Vedānta, even if true without any qualification, is not to the point either. For Śaṅkara and his followers have all along been contending that this chapter is mainly for adducing an indirect proof of the Vedāntic position emerging out of the internal differences on crucial points of vital importance among the scholars not subscribing to the conclusions of Advaita. We shall therefore, assume that the work is from that author's pen, and try to investigate how far and for what reasons, he has taken over the technique and method of the Mādhyamika. To take up the second point first, Prof. Mūrti observes that pre-Gauḍapāda-Śaṅkara Vedānta is Ekātmavāda, monism ; it is not Advaita, Absolutism. It did not formulate a theory of appearance (Vivartavāda) ; no need was felt to draw the distinction between the Paramārtha and the Vyāvahārika or the texts into 'Para and Apra' (CBP 111). It is only with regard to such points that he suspects Mādhyamika influence on the Vedāntin. "He (The Vedāntin) had before him the Mādhyamika distinction of Paramārtha and Samvṛti, of texts into Nītārtha and Neyārtha, his reaching the real by the method of negating the unreal appearances etc. The Mādhyamika and the Yōgācāra also had a theory of illusion to account for the emergence of appearance. Knowledge of this turn in Buddhism must have sent the Vedāntin back to his own texts and enabled him to perceive the truer meaning of the Upariṣads in advaitism" (CPB pp. 116-117).

We shall take up these points one by one. We shall see first of all whether there was an unexpected 'revolution in Aupaniṣada thought ushered in by Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda,' (CPB p. 110) or whether 'owing to its own inner dynamism the Upaniṣadic tradition too was heading towards absolutism' (Ibid. p. 112). The latter is proposed by the Professor just as a plausible hypothesis but dismissed as unworthy of consideration on the score of its impossibility. "There was not much development in the Aupaniṣada school ; it produced a considerable amount of exegetical literature and envolved a Mīmāṃsā, but as regards originality and striking a new path, it remained stagnant and sluggish". (Ibid. p. 113). But this appears to me to be rather a hasty conclusion. Sureśvarācārya in his *Bṛhadārṇyaka Bhāṣya Vārtika*, especially in the *Sam-bandha Vārtika*, exhibits a number of monistic schools contending with one another for the first place in Vedāntic tradition. Not all of them were Pariṇāmavādins teaching modification of Brahman, or schools teaching Videhamukti, liberation after death, in preference to Jīvanmukti or release in this life. Notable among these are schools which teach (1) *Bheda Vilaya* (SV. p. 116) or *Prapañca Vilaya*, dissolving the universe to attain unity of Brahman ; (2) *Vāsanā Nirōdha* (SV. p. 112), or destruction of the haunting impression of the reality of the three states, waking dream and sound sleep ; (3) *Jñānavidhi* (SV 141), or Vedic injunction of knowledge ; (4) *Prasaṅkhyāna Vidhi* (SV p. 211) or injunction of continued practice of right knowledge supported by ratiocination, in order to make the knowledge of the non-dual Ātman strong enough to resist Avidyā ; (5) *Sākṣātkāra*

Jñāna, (Br. V. 1168) or continued practice of indirect knowledge gained through scripture in order to materialise it into realisation. Some of these monistic schools are found to be taken up for refutation in Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya also. Can it be maintained, in the face of this seething unrest among the followers of Upaniṣads, that the Absolutism of Gauḍapāda could not possibly have been the result of a gradual unfoldment from within the Upaniṣadic monistic teaching itself ?

4. Absolutistic Trend In Upaniṣads

Prof. Mūrthy asks : "Pre-Gauḍapāda-Śaṅkara Vedānta is monistic, not Advaitic ; how could it suddenly take an absolutistic turn ?" (CPB p. 112). We have seen that the emergence of Absolutism was by no means so sudden or unnaturally abrupt. There were a number of antecedent fermenting streams of thought tending towards it. But even in their absence, it is easy to see that absolutism need not have waited upon extraneous aid for its appearance. There are ample signs of absolutism in Upaniṣads themselves. A shrewd eye like that of Gauḍapāda might very well discern this tendency in those ancient revelations which mostly commence with or culminate in rejecting all duality or difference in Brahman. 'अकायमव्रणमस्नाविरम्' (ई. ८) 'अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययम्' (कां. १-३-१४) 'यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यम्' (मुं. १-१-६) 'तदच्छायमशरीरमलोहितम्' (प्र. ४-१०) 'नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिःप्रज्ञम्' (मां. ७) 'अदृश्येऽनात्म्येऽनिरुक्तेऽनिलयनेऽभयं प्रतिष्ठां विन्दते' (तै. २-७) 'एकमेवाद्वितीयम्' (छा. ६-२-१) 'अपागादग्नेरग्नित्वं वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयम्' (छा. ६-४-१) 'अस्थूलमनणु' (बृ. २-८८) 'अथात आदेशो नेति नेति' (बृ. २-३-६) Such persistant denial of duality

in Brahman, the only possible source of all, and declaration of all duality as apparent, should have been quite sufficient to suggest and persuade a reflective mind, that Absolutism is the goal of all sacred teaching.

We may now turn round and put this question : The ancient Buddhistic canon mostly taught the ephemeral nature of the universe and presented a rigorous chain of antecedents and consequents in all phenomena. How could the founder of the Mahāyāna system suddenly rise to the idea of *Naiṣvābhāya* or essencelessness of things ? True, he had a number of Prajñāpāramitā works to guide him, but they were mostly religious and mystical treatises with no philosophical flavour about them like Upaniṣads. Could we not suppose that the Buddhistic denial of the pluralistic phenomena and the tendency to trace them all to a Dharmadhātu took its cue from Upaniṣads ?¹ Most of the eminent Mahāyānist philosophers including Nāgārjuna were Brahmins who had no doubt imbibed the Upaniṣadic teaching which reiterated the negation of the reality of the phenomenal world in no uncertain terms. Would it be a very long jump to suppose that when they were converted to Buddhism which from its very inception denied Ātman

1. With regard to Mahāyāna Sūtras anterior to Nāgārjuna, G. Tucci remarks, in his *Doctrines of Maitreya (nātha) and Asanga* (p. 5) “ It is an enormous literature which shows how characteristic Hindu ideas were creeping into Buddhism.” Again (Ibid p. 19) “We learn in fact from the Chinese and Tibetan-sources that he (Nāgārjuna) was accused by the Śrāvakās, that is, the followers of Hīnayāna, to have forged the Maha Prajñāpāramitā which he was said to have received from the Nāgas” Prof. Murti himself writes thus; “External (Brahmanical) influence on the rise of Mahāyāna has been surmised by some scholars, e.g. Kern, Max Muller, Keith, Stcherbatsky and others.” (CPB p. 81).

or Brahman, they naturally incorporated the rejection of reality of phenomena into the new teaching with due adaptation ? I am not altogether alone in making this surmise. This is what Prof. Dāsgupta writes in his *History of Indian Philosophy*. “I agree with the late Dr. S.C. Vidyābhuṣaṇa in holding that both the Yōgācāra system and the system of Nāgārjuna evolved from the *Prajñāpāramitā*. Nāgārjuna’s merit consisted in the dialectical form of his arguments in support of Śūnyavāda ; but so far as the essentials of Śūnyavāda are concerned, I believe that the Tathata philosophy of Aśvaghōṣa and the philosophy of the *Prajñāpāramitā* contained no less”. (HIP Vol. I. p. 421). And with regard to the Tathata philosophy itself the Professor remarks as follows : “This doctrine seems to be more in agreement with the view of an absolute unchangeable reality as the ultimate truth than that of nihilistic idealism of *Lankāvatāra*. Considering the fact that Aśvaghōṣa was a learned Brahmin scholar in early life, it is easy to guess that there was much Upaniṣad influence in this interpretation of Buddhism which compares so favourably with the Vedānta as interpreted by Śaṅkara” (Ibid p. 138).¹ I do not mean to endorse or emphasize all that professor Dāsgupta has said here. But the conclusion seems irresistible that the early Saṃskṛta writers of Mahāyāna may have taken some hints from Upaniṣads in respect of holding the ideal or unreal

1. In fairness to Prof. Mūrti, I ought to tell my readers that he considers that the *Bhūta-Tathata* concept seems to be later to Nāgārjuna and that probably the *Mahāyāna Śraddhōtpāda Śāstra* is the work of Aśvaghōṣa II 5th.Century A.D. (See note 4 on p. 79 of CPB). Whatever be the fact, it does not of course, affect the theory of scholars who surmise Vedāntic influence on Mahāyāna.

nature of the universe. It does happen very often that the tables are turned in making guesses on insecure bases ; but I do not like to be a partner in such games. On the whole, I perfectly agree with Prof. Mūrti in thinking that “it is a matter of conjecture and presumption whether and to what extent there had been borrowing on either side” (CPB p. 109).

5. Was There A School Of Advaitic Absolutism Anterior To Gauḍapāda ?

We shall now turn to another aspect of the question. Is Gauḍapāda personally responsible for the supposed revolution in the Aupaniṣada tradition, or had he any predecessors in the field whose views he was, perhaps, the first to systematize ? Prof. Mūrti quite admits the possibility of this alternative when he says “Śaṅkara’s reference to Gauḍapāda as one knowing the tradition (sampradāya vid), may mean that there was an advaitic school of Vedānta too, although it might not have been a dominant one”. (CPB p. 113). Indeed, as the Professor adds in a footnote on the same page, indications are not wanting that Gauḍapāda himself may be appealing to older teachers of his own tradition when he uses expressions like वेदान्तेषु विचक्षणैः (2-31) मुनिभिर्वेदपारगैः (2-35) etc.

But there is no necessity to be satisfied with mere guesses, for we have positive evidence to this effect in Śaṅkara’s writings. In the first place, his frequent reference to Sampradāya (tradition) in his Bhāṣyas is in itself impressive. We have already seen his references to Gauḍapāda as a ‘Sampradāya vid’. In his *Gūḍa Bhāṣya* we have passages to convince us as to how much store he sets by a good tradition. This one is in reference to an

opponent who holds that the individual soul is ultimately merged in Brahman through meditation based upon a knowledge of the distinction of Kṣetra and Kṣetrajña, the material world and Īśvara respectively : “The fool of a pandit who hopes to reconcile the doctrine of Samsāra and liberty with the Śāstra in this way, is really a suicide. Being self-deluded, he deludes others as well, because for want of the right tradition he abandons the express teaching of the Śruti and offers an imaginary construction of his own. Hence being bereft of the tradition, he must be ignored like a fool, albeit he may happen to be versed in all Śāstras”. एवं मन्वानो यः स पण्डितापसदः संसारमोक्षयोः शास्त्रस्य चार्थवत्त्वं करोमीति, आत्महा स्वयं मूढोऽन्यांश्च व्यामोहयति शास्त्रार्थसंप्रदायरहितत्वात् श्रुतहानिमश्रुतकल्पनां च कुर्वन् । तस्मादसंप्रदायवित् सर्वशास्त्रविदपि मूर्खवदेवोपेक्षणीयः । (G. Bh. 13-2). And this passage is an answer to those that think it difficult or impossible to get a knowledge of the Self owing to its being formless : “True, it is so for those who have not been properly initiated by a teacher knowing the right tradition, for those who have not properly listened to Vedāntic teachings, for those whose mind is quite engrossed in the external objects of sense and for those who are untrained in the use of the valid means of knowledge”. सत्यमेवं गुरुसंप्रदाय रहितानाम्, अश्रुतवेदान्तानाम्, अत्यन्तबहिर्विषयासक्तबुद्धीनाम्, सम्यक्प्रमाणेष्वकृतश्रमाणाम् (G. Bh. 18-50).

Here are some direct references bearing testimony to the existence of a tradition of absolutism before Śaṅkara and presumably Gauḍapāda. In *Gāṇā Bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara introduces us to a Ślōka (13-13) in these words : “Even the illusory form due to Upādhis is treated as though it

were a property of Brahman the knowable, just for the sake of rendering its existence conceivable. Hence the statement that it is with hands and feet everywhere. Accordingly the knowers of the right tradition say 'Reality devoid of all manifoldness is explained through deliberate super-imposition of attributes and subsequent negation.'." तथाहि संप्रदायविदां वचनम् 'अध्यारोपापवादाभ्यां निष्प्रपञ्चं प्रपञ्च्यते' इति । Again in the *Māṇḍūkya Bhāṣya*, while concluding a discussion on the function of the Śāstra as a means of knowledge of Ātman Śaṅkara quotes a Sūtra of the knowers of Āgama सिद्धं तु निवर्तकत्वादित्यागमविदां सूत्रम् । "The validity of the Śāstra is established just because it negates (properties not pertaining to the self-evident Ātman)" (GK. Bh. 2-32). Once more in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara appeals to his tradition in support of his interpretation of texts treating of creation. अत्र च संप्रदायविद आख्यायिकामाचक्षते "And here, the knowers of the right tradition narrate a story (in illustration of this truth.)" (Br. Bh. 2-1-20 p. 297). We learn from the glossator Ānandagiri that these are references to a certain Draviḍācārya, who, according to the glossator again, wrote an extensive commentary on the *Chāṇḍōgya Upaniṣad* also.

From another source we learn about one more teacher of this school, Vākyakāra Brahmānandin. In his commentary on the 217th verse of the third chapter of Sarvajñātma's *San̥kṣepa Śārīraka*, Madhusūdana Saraswati gives an extract from that ancient thinker with prefatory remarks of his own, well-worth quoting in extenso :

छान्दोग्यवाक्यकारेण ब्रह्मनन्दिनापि पूर्वपक्षेऽसतः सतश्चोत्पत्तौ दोषमुक्त्वा सांव्यवहारिकमायामयत्वपक्षेण समाधानमुक्तम् । नासत उत्पत्तिः । अनिष्पाद्यत्वात् ।

नापि सतः । प्रवृत्त्यानर्थक्यात् सत्त्वाविशेषात् । अभिव्यक्त्यर्थमिति चेत् । न ।
तस्या अपि सत्त्वात् । प्रवृत्तिनित्यत्वाच्च सदाभिव्यक्तिप्रसङ्गः । न ।
संव्यवहारमात्रत्वादिति (SS 3-217).

It is worthy of note that here the *Pūrvapakṣin* is made to emphasize the impossibility of the origination either of the existent or of the non-existent which dilemma Brahmanandin avoids by taking all birth as संव्यवहारमात्र conventional only, or in Gauḍapāda's words, मायया जन्म illusory birth.

Last but not the least in importance, are the three Ślōkas¹ quoted at the end of Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on the fourth Brahma-Sūtra. They are quoted to support the doctrines of (१) मिथ्यात्मा illusory self, (२) बोधे कार्यं कथं भवेत् the incompatibility of Karma with Brahma-knowledge, (३) अन्विष्टः स्यात् प्रमातैव पाप्मदोषादिवर्जितः the identity of the seeker after knowledge with Brahman as soon as Brahman is realised, (४) प्रमाणं त्वात्मनिश्चयात् the limitation of the Pramāṇas to the empirical life and their sublation by knowledge of the Supreme Self - tenets of vital importance to Advaita Vedānta of the type that Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara commend.

The question may be now considered as well-nigh settled, I think. It is not merely probable but absolutely certain, that Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda did have a tradition of Advaitic teachers who had been contending to hold

1. These Ślōkas are commonly attributed to Sundara Pāṇḍya, who is credited with their authorship by the commentator on the *Sūta Samhitā*. But Scholars would be benefitted by a further investigation into this matter, for Śaṅkara is never known to quote from any Śaivite sources in his classical works.

their own against other monistic schools who were all busy struggling to establish that their school had the sole right to represent the original Upaniṣadic teaching. Mutual influence of the Advaita and the Mādhyaṃika systems was not impossible during those times though we have no means of ascertaining to what extent this took place in fact. Prof. Mūrti's remarks in this connection are very significant. "Influence is not necessarily acceptance or borrowing of doctrines. That too is influence which stimulates the systems to modify, revise or even to reaffirm their doctrines. Influence may be expressed as much through opposition as by acceptance." (CPB p. 56). The development of either system may be as much due to reaction upon the other as to its inherent capacity to march on. Perhaps Gauḍapāda's work represents the last phase of this kind of reaction on the Vedāntic side. We must be therefore, cautious, I think, in our pronouncements in such matters even if we actually find witnesses on either side accusing the other of serious plagiarism.¹

1. I subjoin two instances of this : (a) "The Buddhists, however, take it in a more serious light and charge Śaṅkara with stealing the idea, Śūnya, from them, and giving it a new name, Brahman."- M. M. Haraprasāda Śāstri's introduction to AVS p. xxvi.

(b) त्रिशताधिकसहस्रसंवत्सरेभ्यः प्राक् काञ्च्यां कृतराज्यभारः पल्लववंशोत्पन्नसार्वभौमेषु अन्यतमः महेन्द्रवर्मा नाम महीपतिः स्वविरचिते मत्तविलासाख्यप्रहसने शाक्यपिशुं बुद्धमधिकृत्य ब्रवीति -

वेदान्तेष्वो गृहीत्वार्थान् यो महाभारतादपि ।

विप्राणां मिषतामेव कृतवान् कोशसञ्चयम् ॥ इति ॥

- P. Subrahmanya Śāstri अ.अ.पा.पृ. ३३३

In a play *Matta Vilāsa-Prahasana*, a farce composed by Maheन्द्रa Varma, a Pallava king who ruled at Conjivaram more than a thousand three hundred years ago, Buddha is charged with having robbed and appropriated Upaniṣads and Mahābhārata of their riches.

6. Gauḍapāda's Alleged Borrowing From Mahāyāna Works

And we now come to the direct matter in hand. What about the striking similarity of words, expressions and even thoughts between Gauḍapāda's Karikās especially in the fourth chapter, and Mahāyāna works ? Is there no borrowing here at all ? If there is, what is it that induced the writer to go to non-Vedic sources for help ? Two explanations are possible. Either Vedānta was not sufficiently developed to have a neat set of technical terms or a method of its own, so that it was only natural for it to utilize and adopt what was ready at hand in a system akin to it at least in some respects, or else, Gauḍapāda had an ulterior purpose in view, to serve which he has deliberately chosen this vocabulary and dialectic even from a foreign source. Neither of these suppositions is inconceivable. But facts alone can decide the question one way or the other.

Prof. Mūrti seems to accept the first alternative when he says : "The Vedānta philosophers did not and could not accept the Buddhistic metaphysics - its denial of the self, momentariness etc. ; but they did press into service the Mādhyamika dialectic and the Vijñānavāda analysis of illusion. No absolutism could be established without the dialectic and this theory of illusion." (CPB p. 13) Are we to understand that Advaitism really stood in dire need of this dialectic and this theory of illusion, lest it should not be able to stand upon its own legs as a species of absolutism ? I am afraid, it did not. Vedānta has been supposed to start in common with Vijñānavāda, with an analysis of an empirical illusion, and then to

apply it analogically to the world illusion ; and since the illusoriness of all phenomena does not necessarily follow from this, the system is obliged to seek its cue for pronouncing the world illusory in an extra-philosophical or theological knowledge derived from Upaniṣads, while the Vijñānavāda bases itself on the deliverances of the highest trance-states (CPB pp. 158 and 216). But what are the actual facts ? Does Gauḍapāda start from an examination of empirical illusion and then extend his conclusions to the world-illusion ? In the second chapter of his work mostly devoted to demonstrate the unreality of the world, we are confronted with the classical example of the rope-snake only once, and that not as the basis for attacking the problem of world-illusion, but only to illustrate what has been already shown at length by an appeal to life and experience, to wit, that Ātman is the substrate of all illusory phenomena. Dream is no doubt employed to prove the unreality of the world, but here is no analogical reasoning from the example of a dream. It is rather an appeal to appreciate the undeniable metaphysical identity of waking and dream as a fact of universal experience. Again, casual reference is made to Upaniṣads (Śruti or Vedāntas) twice or thrice, but on none of these occasions do we find the revelation invoked as a theological authority. It is not true to fact to say that Gauḍapāda depends upon an authoritative pronouncement at any stage of his argument for the proof of the world-illusion. Śruti, in the Advaita of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara at any rate, only means a suggestion of truth based on facts of experience, and is no more a binding authority on the mind of the seeker of truth than the sign-post on

the cross road pointing to the nature and extent of the way ahead.

We may now take up the question of the Buddhistic terminology and dialectic. The first thing that strikes the reader is that neither of these obtrudes on his attention in the first three chapters to any appreciable degree while they are found to loom large in the fourth. May it not be that the author, who could have very well dispensed with these aids without feeling any lack, has deliberately adopted this language and method of exposition with some set-purpose undiscovered by surface critics ? I am of opinion that in unravelling this secret, one may get some help from the much-maligned Śāṅkara Bhāṣya,¹ if only one is not afraid of losing caste by shaking off the thickset influence of the deep-seated current opinion among the generality of orientalists that Gauḍapāda has borrowed from Buddhistic works, or at any rate, has been very much influenced by Buddhistic ways of thinking. In his opening remarks of the fourth chapter Śāṅkara says that after establishing the reality of Advaita directly with the help of both Āgama and appropriate reason, Gauḍapāda now proceeds to show by *Aviñānyāya*, the indirect method

1. The following may be cited as fair specimens of the wholesale condemnation of Śāṅkara the commentator on Māṇḍūkya, by scholars influenced by stereo-typed opinion prepossessed by Buddhistic bias ; (1) 'In my translation I have not followed Śāṅkara, for he has, I think, tried his level best to explain away the most obvious references to Buddha and Buddhism in *Gauḍapāda Kārikās*' (prof. Dāsgupta's remarks-HIP vol I p. 424). "Not being satisfied with the interpretation offered by Śāṅkara and his followers or some other teachers, I have attempted in the following pages to present to the reader my own interpretation of the work as I have understood." Prof. V. Bhaṭṭācārya's preface (AS p. viii).

of logic, how even the mutually opposed sets of opinion among the dualists and Buddhists point to the truth of Advaita as well as to the fallacious nature of the other systems. Granting that this is so, we should not be surprised to find Gauḍapāda employ the terminology and method of the other systems to display how they stand self-convicted by their own showing. A close examination of the procedure followed here would go to show that mostly differences of opinion between the Sāṅkhya and Vaiśeṣika on the one hand and the Vaibhāsika and the Vijñānavāda on the other, are exhibited here and ultimately the Vedāntic conclusion based on the three states of consciousness, is given at the end in order to round off the whole work. Special emphasis is laid in the closing Ślōkas on how Pure Consciousness transcending, and metaphysically comprehending in itself, the triple distinction of knower, knowledge and the known - revealed by Vedānta on an examination of the three states - was never taught by the Vijñānavāda of Buddhists, however superior its logic might appear as compared to that of the realistic systems. I have tried to show in the course of my Saṃskṛta Vivṛti how Gauḍapāda indirectly hints at the extra-ordinary appropriateness of certain Buddhistic terms and reasonings in the context of Vedānta rather than in that of the systems to which they are supposed to be indigenous. This practice of adapting the technique of other systems to their own, is by no means unusual with Vedāntins. An instance in point is the usage, by the author of the Brahma-Sūtras, of such words as 'Pratyakṣa' (in the sense of Śruti), 'Anumāna' (in the sense of Smṛti) and 'Pradhāna', (in the sense of Brah-

man) etc.¹ Parallel procedure will perhaps be found in other systems also.²

7. The Vedāntic Dialectic

And now for the question of the dialectic. Had Gauḍapāda his own critique of the understanding and reason, or was he obliged to borrow one from another source, since no absolutism can thrive without the dialectic ? Prof. Mūrti says “Dialectic is a self-conscious spiritual movement ; it is necessarily a critique of reason. This is not possible without the consciousness of the opposition of the thesis and the anti-thesis. There must be at least two view-points or patterns of interpretation diametrically opposed to each other” (CPB p. 124). Again, “Philosophy, when cultivated seriously and systemati-

1. Another instance may be gleaned from Mahābhārata in which we find-chiefly in the Udyōga, Ānuśāsanika, and Śanti parvas, Ślōkas in abundance which appear to be echoes of the Dhammapada Gāthās. Specially note-worthy is a section of the Vanaparva (3-77, 78, 79, 80) which mentions a course of discipline entitled Astāngamārga with, of course, details different from those mentioned in Buddhism. Parallel to Dhammapada Gāthās, are to be found in Manu, and perhaps in other Smṛtis and Purāṇas. Whoever may be the imitator in such cases, it is evident that the principle of adaptation of foreign terminology and expressions to suit one's own purpose remains undisturbed.

2. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan observes “That the terms employed by a particular set of thinking may be borrowed by another set and used in senses slightly different from the original ones, is proved by the history of Buddhism itself” (GP p. 209). The doctor, however, has an alternative explanation to offer in the case of Gauḍapāda : “The exigencies of his time must have made him use Bauddha terminology even as the Hindu monks who preach Vedānta in the countries of the west to-day feel the necessity of clothing their thoughts in Christian expressions. (GP p. 320).

cally, leads to interminable and total conflict. Dialectic is implicit in philosophy. Dialectic is at once the consciousness of this interminable and total conflict in reason and the attempt to resolve it" (Ibid. p. 126). Looked at from this thought-position, it must be confessed that there is no possibility of dialectic in the Upaniṣads. "The Upaniṣadic seers do not concern themselves with the different philosophical standpoints and views of the real. Being pioneers in the field, they had not before them many right or wrong views to criticise and to condemn." (CPB p. 48) Whence then did Gauḍapāda derive his dialectic ?¹

The extant literature about Advaitism is too meagre for us to say, with any definiteness, whether or not, dialectic in this sense of the term was indigenous to the system. But this does not matter for our present purpose. For we have seen that the Mādhyamika dialectic is not, after all, very predominant in Gauḍapāda's work. He may have utilized it for aught we know, for the purpose of his *Avitanyāya* indirect proof of *Ajāti*, based upon pure ratiocination. But the question is, is there any critique of reason and experience in his own work at all ? And if so, what was his source for that ?

My answer to this question is, Yes, there is visible to an assiduous seeker a critique, which governs the whole of Gauḍapāda's thought, and his source is that one fountainhead of knowledge to every devout Hindu,

1. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan suggests "probably Gauḍapāda wrote his book on the analogy of Nāgārjuna's *Mūla Mādhyama Kārikā* with a view to make it occupy a position in Advaita similar to that of the latter in the Mādhyamika system (GP 220).

Upaniṣads themselves. True, the Upaniṣadic sages do not exhibit any consciousness of the conflict in reason, and, therefore, cannot lay claim to a critique of reason like that of Nāgārjuna. They never show any anxiety to examine different theories of reality with the hope of transcending conceptual knowledge by that means. They do not propose to construct an intellectual frame-work exhausting all possible categories of the mind, and then proceed to a thorough examination of each till it is reduced to a state of inconsistency or self-contradiction. Indeed, their way and goal lay quite in another direction, and their method was quite suited to their aim. They seem to have felt the futility of merely analysing the faculty of reason, for it can only examine, but can never create, facts. Its one insistent demand is consistency everywhere and consistency may not always characterize facts. Reason is perfectly justified in demanding self-consistency from a proposed theory and it has the right to counsel us to throw away any hypothesis which exhibits its inconsistencies in its make-up. But when a fact universally recognized as such discloses any inconsistencies, reason must simply bear with them. The only function then open to it, will be to seek an explanation.

Such seems to have been the guiding principle of the Ṛṣis who went on questioning life and experience को न आत्मा किं ब्रह्म 'which is our real Self ? Which the Highest Reality underlying all phenomena ?' (Ch. 5-9-1) कोऽयमात्मेति वयमुपास्महे कतरः स आत्मा 'Whom shall we devote ourselves to as our Self, and which is that Self ?' (Ai. 3-1) कस्मिन्नु

भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवति 'which being known, all this becomes known ?' (Mu. 1-1-3). Recognizing the fact that reason can work only on facts supplied, they tried to rummage all the sources of such supply, not only the senses and the mind, but also intuition ; not only the waking state, but also dream and sleep which we can only intuit, but never perceive. Reason, then, working upon experience gained through intuition of the three states, can dissolve all our doubts and difficulties connected with life as restricted to the waking state. This examination of the three states alone conducted on right lines, can disclose the nature of truth and reality.

Now, this is the Vedāntic Dialectic, the critique of experience as a whole, revealed in Upaniṣads specially the Māṇḍūkya, on which Gauḍapāda bases his system of thought. This may or may not be called philosophy according to our notion of the significance of the term. In any case, it is a successful attempt to realise the ultimate reality, and the method used is unique in this respect that it covers life in all its aspects, and is hence able to give us final knowledge of reality. It is not to be compared to the method either of theological discussions or even of speculative thought-systems which confine their attention to facts of the waking state. I have endeavoured in my Samskr̥ta Introduction to Māṇḍūkya Rahasya Vivṛti, to explain the salient features of this method in some detail. Readers interested in the subject are recommended to study the whole of Gauḍapāda's work with the new commentary in which the principles of this special method are reiterated at every step.

Section Three

Gauḍapāda's System Compared With The Mahāyāna Systems

1. Gauḍapāda And Vijñānavāda

It is interesting to note that, until very late in the history of Buddhism, neither Hīnāyāna nor Mahāyāna works have expressly referred to Upaniṣads or any Vedāntic system based on them. The denial of the self is, as is well-known, the basic tenet of Buddhism. And yet Buddha never takes up for consideration the doctrine of the Aupaniṣada Puruṣa described as 'Neti, Neti' in the oldest of the Upaniṣads (Br. 3-9-26), the Universal Self who is the one witness in all beings, conscious and devoid of all attributes (Śve. 6-11). It is singular that even in Mahāyāna works like those of Nāgārjuna, Maitreya, Vasubandhu, Dīṇnāga or Dharmakīrti, no reference is made to this Upaniṣadic teaching, Ātman doctrine *par excellence*, although Sāṅkhya and Vaiśeṣika theories of Ātman are refuted now and then along with *Pudgala* heresy, the doctrine of Ātman as neither different from nor identical with Skandhas upheld by Vātsīputrīya School of Buddhism. Even more surprising, if possible, is their perfect silence with regard to the Vedāntic examination of the three Avasthās on which is based the conclusion that the witnessing Self is the Absolute ; the unrelated invariable principle existing by itself and known by itself, and yet by some magical process manifesting itself as the world of duality. Now this is just the philosophy Gauḍapāda has tried to explain by an appeal to reason and experience. If this is so, can it be confidently asserted that it is a

variety of the Vijñānavāda or Yōgācāravāda of the Buddhists ?

Let us compare some of the cardinal tenets of Vijñānavāda and compare them with Gauḍapāda's corresponding teachings. Gauḍapāda sets forth the controversy between Vijñānavādin and those that postulate the existence of external objects of consciousness. Here is a Ślōka stating Vijñānavādin's view of the matter : प्रज्ञप्तेः सनिमित्तत्वमिष्यते युक्तिदर्शनात् । निमित्तस्यानिमित्तत्वमिष्यते भूतदर्शनात् (GK 4-25). The external object is no cause - or, in the phraseology of the Vijñānavādin, it is no Ālambana Pratyaya - because facts are found to be such. It is very difficult to say exactly what is meant by Bhūtadarśana (experience of facts). But let us take one or two direct quotations from Vijñānavāda works which may throw light on the principal doctrines of that school. Here is a Ślōka from the *Madhyānta Vibhāṅga* of Maitreya-Nātha.

अभूतपरिकल्पोऽस्ति द्वयं तत्र न विद्यते ।¹

शून्यता विद्यते तत्र तस्यामपि स विद्यते ॥

Here Prof. Mūrti explains that according to the commentator the 'Abhūtaparikalpa' means not the wrong ideation itself but the basis of that ideation, that is Vijñāna itself. Maitreya says here that Vijñāna as the basis really exists while the duality imagined to exist in it has no being there. In this Vijñāna is a Śūnyatā of all subject-object appearances ; even in the Śūnyatā is this Vijñāna

1. 'This is referred to as the second Ślōka of the work by G. Tucci (DMA p. 31) as well as Prof. V. Bhaṭṭācārya (AS p. 183), while Prof. Murti says it is the very first Ślōka (CPB p. 105). Probably the last is the correct reference.

or Abhūtaparikalpa, that is to say, nothing can be supposed to exist of which Vijñāna is not the basis. न खल्वभूतपरिकल्पौ न भवति । यथा रज्जुः शून्यासर्पस्वभावेन तत्स्वभावत्वाभावात् सर्वकालं शून्या, न तु रज्जुस्वभावेन । तथेहापि । यच्च शून्यं तस्य सद्भावात् ; येन शून्यं तस्य तत्राभावात् (MVB T pp. 12-13 as quoted in CPB p. 319). This example of the rope-snake given by the commentator evidently implies that Vijñāna alone is real while the dvaya or subject-object relation that is experienced in empirical life is unreal.

And now let us cite a Ślōka from the Māṇḍūkya Kārikās, the first half of which bears a very close similarity to the first half of the above Ślōka :

अभूताभिनिवेशोऽस्ति द्वयं तत्र न विद्यते ।

द्वयाभावं सबुद्ध्वैव निर्निमित्तो न जायते ॥ 4-75

It very much looks as though Gauḍapāda actually borrowed from the Yōgācāra work just mentioned and Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya is certain that it is a borrowing. But a reference to the context of Gauḍapāda Kārika would go to show that the two teachings are entirely different. In the course of my Samskr̥ta Vivṛti, I have shown how Gauḍapāda shows here that neither the Jīva nor the Citta is ever born, whereas the Vijñānavādin is anxious to maintain the reality of citta as against the Mādhyamika who adheres to the doctrine of the (Naisvābhāvya) essencelessness of all things, whether Citta or its objects. Indeed, the author of the Alāta Śānti has actually stated in so many words - 'तस्मान्न जायते चित्तं चित्तदृश्यं न जायते' (GK 4-28) that neither the Citta nor its objects are ever born. No doubt would be left in the mind of the reader about

this matter when this Gauḍapāda's Ślōka (GK 4-75) is read along with the previous and subsequent Ślōkas, whatever construction theorists may try to put upon it as torn from the context.

The following is from the *Ālambana Parīkṣa* of Dinnāga :

यदन्तर्ज्ञेयरूपं तु बहिर्वदवभासते ।

सोऽर्थो विज्ञानरूपत्वात्तत्प्रत्ययतयापि च ॥¹

That is, the real object of consciousness which really existing inside appears as though it were outside. For it is both of the form of consciousness and the condition determining it (AP 6). But what does Gauḍapāda say about the relation between Citta and its object ?

उभे ह्यन्योन्यदृश्ये ते किं तदस्तीति चोच्यते ।

लक्षणाशून्यमुभयं तन्मतेनैव गृह्यते ॥ (GK 4-67)

“Since both these are relative to each other, we cannot say which of these exists of itself ; both are undefinable being grasped only through that consciousness.” Evidently Gauḍapāda here wants to show that the Vijñānavādin cannot establish the absolute existence of consciousness, since he cannot meet the argument of the Mādhyamika that everything has only a relative being. The author's own position may be gathered from the second chapter of the work where he has shown at length how both the internal ideas and external objects are seemingly real or unreal insofar as they are limited to the

1. Restored into Samskr̥ta from Tibetan by Pandit N. Ayyaswami Śāstri, Madras.

particular state - waking or dream in which they make their appearance, but, absolutely, they are all unreal (GK 2-9, 10, 14,15). At the same time, he also states the Vedāntic view that Ātman is the basis of both the internal and external phenomena of either state. (GK 2-12, 17, 18).

Vasubandhu, an earlier Yōgācāra Vijñānavādin, offers the following criticism of perception :

प्रत्यक्षबुद्धिः स्वप्नादौ यथा सा च यदा तदा ।

न सोऽर्थो दृश्यते तस्य प्रत्यक्षत्वं कथं मतम् ॥¹

The idea of perception may be due to an illusion just like that in a dream. Moreover, when the idea 'I have perceived it' arises, then the thing is not perceived at all ; for it is the Manōvijñāna that comes to that conclusion, and at that time the Chakṣurvijñāna is gone. And in particular, the object itself is momentary and so its form and other qualities have quite disappeared by then. How then can we say that we have perceived the object ? (Vim. 16).

I have given a paraphrase of the Ślōka just to show that such criticisms of perception are never to be found in Gauḍapāda. His position is that a given set of perceptions of things is true only for that particular state - waking or dream - in which it takes place. In the next Ślōka, Vasubandhu goes on to say that just as a so-called perception may arise without an external object, so too

1. I have taken down the whole Ślōka without the intervening prose. For the original as it is, see Vimśka, Appendix A to (p. 108) *Ālambana Parīkṣa*.

memory is possible without a real perception. Gauḍapāda is innocent of this argument also.

The next argument of Vasubandhu is of greater interest because it is calculated to show the distinction between the two systems in its true perspective. He anticipates an objection that waking perception should not be likened to a semblance of perception in a dream, for no one is able to realise that there is no actual object corresponding to waking perception, whereas everyone is aware of the absence of objects in dream perceptions. This argument is not sound, says Vasubandhu, for no one thinks that the external things are not there in a dream perception before he awakes :

एवं वितथविकल्पाभ्यासवासनानिद्रया प्रसुप्तो लोकः स्वप्न इवाभूतमर्थं पश्यन् अप्रबुद्धस्तदभावं यथावन्नावगच्छति । यदा तु तत्प्रतिपक्षलोकोत्तरनिर्विकल्पज्ञानलाभात् प्रबुद्धो भवति तदा तत्पृष्ठलब्धशुद्ध-लौकिकज्ञानसंमुखीभावात् विषयाभावं यथावदवगच्छतीति समानमेतत् (Vim. 17, p. 109). “Similarly the common man used to a repeated constructive imagination of unreal things and absorbed in a sleep of prolonged mental impression, perceives non-existing objects, as in a dream, and cannot decide that they are not there really, before he is awake. When, however, he awakes by the attainment of the sublating *Lōkōttara* (transcendental) knowledge free from constructive imagination, then he comes to the right conclusion owing to the *Sūddhalaukika Jñāna* - pure knowledge without any object - with which he is confronted in the wake of the aforesaid *Lōkōttarajñāna*.”

Here perhaps one might trace certain Buddhistic influences to which Gauḍapāda possibly reacted in drawing up his own programme of the set-up of the gradu-

ation of enlightenment after striking off ignorance. Vasubandhu's suggestion that the common man has been in a long dream, and that he awakens to the truth of *Vijñāptimāratā* when he attains to the transcendental knowledge, may have sent our author back to the Upaniṣad teaching where, after an examination of the three states, Saṃsāra (transmigratory life) is described at length and then freedom from bondage is shown to result from knowledge. This is not impossible. But neither is it impossible that Upaniṣads themselves - such as Kaṭha (1-3-14) उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान् निबोधत 'Awake arise, go to the wise and know the truth' - may have given him the suggestion of a dream. Whatever be the truth, the idea of comparing empirical life to a dream, it must be noted, suggests to the two thinkers two totally distinct and different modes of spiritual awakening. While Vasubandhu proposes the achievement of *Suddhalaukika Jñāna* of the highest trance, Gauḍapāda is satisfied that a systematic examination of the three states, in the light of Upaniṣads, is quite competent to deliver the goods without the necessity of having recourse to any individual mystic experience.¹ Indeed, for him, it is not an experience of the absence of either the subject or the object or both that matters. For we do experience in daily life, the absence of the object in dreams, and the absence of both the subject and the object in sound sleep. Accordingly, Gauḍapāda applies the

1. Manōnigraha according to Gauḍapāda (GK 3-40 to 46) has been often confounded with some yōgic practice. The error involved in the confusion has been exposed and the true nature of that process explained in my Samskr̥ta commentary, the Māṇḍūkya Rahasya Vivṛti.

terms *Laukika* (common experience), *Śuddha Laukika* (pure experience) and *Lōkōttara* (transcendental experience) to waking, dream and dreamless sleep respectively unlike the Yōgācāra-Vijñānavādin who is keen about using them for particular grades of consciousness. According to Gauḍapāda, it is not in any particular state bereft of empirical consciousness - such as deep sleep or trance - that we should look to our deliverance from ignorance.

अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते ।

अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा ॥ (गौ. का. १-१६)

Only when the individual soul awakes from its beginningless illusory sleep, it comes to realise the Absolute unborn, sleepless and dreamless ; the Absolute which is, in the words of *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिःप्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् neither inward consciousness, nor outward unconsciousness, nor both, nor one mass of consciousness, neither consciousness nor unconsciousness ; transcending, in short, all states or grades of consciousness whatsoever. Transcendence of consciousness, the distinguishing characteristic of the ego, necessarily entails transcendence of the characteristics of the non-ego as well. Hence the Śruti describes it thus : अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यम् : unseen, beyond all practical proceedings, ungraspable, uninferable through any sign, unthinkable, unutterable. These mutually opposed elements of the waking condition, are in this state of realisation merged into one, for they have been always one in this Absolute called Ātman for the sake of shortness. From a different angle of vision, Gauḍapāda calls

it Sarvaḍṛk (1-12) - the All-seeing One, for it is the very essence of all being and knowing transcending both - *Prapañcōpaśamam*. One who has realised It knows that he is ever one with It and hence is *Sarvajña*, the all-knowing One (4-85, 89).

To sum up the results obtained so far : (1) Vijñānavāda is obsessed by a bias towards empirical consciousness which it is anxious to free from the trammels of external objects ; Vedānta looks upon both consciousness and its objects as phenomena contingent to their particular state, waking or dream. (2) Vijñānavāda regards all subject-object relation as an illusory thought-construction in consciousness and likens it to a dream and hopes to be able to purge consciousness of this impurity by passing it through the fire of a mystic trance. Vedānta, on the other hand, regards all subject-object relation as peculiar to the state in which it manifests itself. These are in fact manifestations of Reality itself. The system of Vedānta treats waking and dream states as metaphysically identical, and from the standpoint of Ātman or the Witnessing Consciousness common to both states, it regards, them as absolutely unreal in themselves while in essence they are one with that Ātman. Vedānta feels no need of any special experience to realise this fact. (3) Vijñānavāda recognizes three grades of consciousness (Laukika) mundane, (Śuddha Laukika) pure mundane, and (Lōkōttara) supramundane ; the last is got through the aid of a trance. Vedānta recognizes no grades of consciousness though there may be apparent manifestations of it belonging to different ranks in empirical life. Consciousness is absolutely free and one with Ātman and as such admits of neither change nor degree. It is ever *Aja*, unborn, above all states.

2. The Historical Background Of Śūnyavāda

A short digression will be necessary before we proceed further. Although the Mādhyamika school is chronologically anterior to the Yōgācāra-Vijñānavāda, the latter had to be taken up first not merely because it is generally considered by some Buddhists to be a more systematical exposition of Buddhism, but chiefly because it is more likely to be misunderstood to be the source of the Advaitic Vedānta. But it must be borne in mind that the order of the emergence of the most important schools of Buddhism is Theravāda, Vaibhāṣika or Sarvāstivavāda, Mādhyamika and Yōgācāra which later on became the Vijñānavāda. The canonical literature of the first school is in Pāli while that of the rest is in Saṃskṛta. This accounts for the comparatively very little, if any, reference to the Theravāda in Brahmanical works. The Vaibhāṣikas are so called because they follow the *Mahāvibhāṣa* and the *Vibhāṣa* commentaries on their original *Jñānaprasthāna* consisting of seven works.¹ Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyamika Śāstra*, also known as *Mūla Mādhyamika Kārikas*, is chiefly a criticism of the Abhidharma philosophy of the Vaibhāṣikas or Sarvāstivavādins. Very little of the canon of the Sarvāstivavādins is available in Saṃskṛta, but from the Chinese translation of their Tripitaka, we learn that they denied the existence of a permanent soul, but accepted the discrete momentary entities - classified into Skandhas, Āyatanas and Dhātus - whose substance or essence was real for all the three divisions

1. See CPB p. 68. Having no first-hand information about these details, I have mostly drawn upon works like CPB, SBT, and HIP (vol. I).

of time.¹ The Mādhyamika rejects their pluralism and maintains the absolute Śūnyatā (essencelessness) of all the elements.

3. Veda And Buddhism

It is well-known that Buddhism was a revolt against Vedic religion at least in two respects. In the first place, it abhorred the sacrificial cult involving animal slaughter ; and in the second place, it abolished the doctrine of Ātman who had been believed by the Vaidikas to survive the body in order to be able to enjoy the fruits of his Karma. As a corollary to his opposition to sacrifices, perhaps, Buddha could entertain no respect for the authority of the Vedas as a revelation. His teaching that every thing was impermanent, was against the Vedic doctrine too. This spirit of hostility too was very naturally resented by Mīmāṃsakas like Śābarasvāmin and Kumārila, and possibly by the author of the *Mīmāṃsa-Sūtras* himself if we are to believe that the Sūtras are Post-Buddhist as scholars declare.² The Sūtra defining Dharma as that which is known only by means of a Vedic injunction चोदनालक्षणोऽर्थो धर्मः (जै. सू. १-१-२) and the subsequent Sūtras which undertake to examine the other Pramāṇas before concluding that Śabda alone is the valid means of knowledge in the case of Dharma, is perhaps intended to show that the Vedas ought to be accepted as an authority in matters transcendental. Śābara's discussion about the existence of Ātman apart from the body³ and his examina-

1. CPB p. 69, SBY p. 109, HIP p. 115.

2. Composed about 200 B. C. according to Professor Dāsgupta (HIP p. 370 Vol I).

3. कोऽसावन्यो नैनमुपलभामहे (Śābara Bhāṣya 1-1-5 p. 14)

tion of the *Nirālambana* and *Śūnya* theories¹ support this view. Add to this Kumāṛila's attack on the *Sarvajñatā* (omniscience) of Buddha (SI.V. *Cōdana Sūtra* p. 117) while defending the validity of the Vedas as a means of knowledge and the counter-arguments by Dharmakīrti and Prajñākara to disprove the authoritativeness of the Vedas and enthusiastically to maintain the infallibility of Buddha (PVB pp. 532-537, pp. 50-164), and the matter becomes quite intelligible in this light.

4. Upaniṣads and Buddhism

But the attitude of Buddhism towards Upaniṣads is by no means so very clear. Prof. Mūrti, indeed, maintains that in the dialogues of Buddha "there is a distinct spirit of opposition, if not one of hostility as well to the Ātmavāda of the Upaniṣads." (CPB p. 16). I hesitate to endorse this view. In the Sūtras no doubt Buddha teaches again and again that in no one of the Skandhas can we recognize Ātman and there is no other Ātman independent of them. But no reference whatsoever is found to be made there to the one constant Ātman common to all. I have already said that no reference is seen, in the entire range of Buddhist literature, to the examination of the three states establishing the transcendental Ātman. Arguments from silence are not always positive proofs, but yet I invite the attention of scholars to this uniform silence of the Buddhists. This point may perhaps be of some use in settling the relation of the Buddhistic systems and Vedānta.

It is sometimes maintained that Buddha's condemnation of rituals and the outward forms of the caste-

1. ननु सर्व एव निरालम्बनः शून्यस्त (Ibid p. 7)

system as contrasted with intrinsic character is very much the same as that found in Upaniṣads or Bhagavadgītā. The implication is, perhaps, either that Buddhism is an evolution out of Upaniṣadic thought, or else that its chief target for criticism is the philosophy of Upaniṣads rather than forms of Vedic religion. Neither of the interpretations seems to fit in with facts. Upaniṣads and Gītā no doubt contain occasional passages seemingly scoffing at Karma, but a careful study of the context of such passages, would go to show that Vedānta, unlike Buddhism, is not a whole-sale condemnation of all Karma. It only teaches how Karma instead of being considered as an end in itself, can be sublimated into a valuable means to Brahmavidyā. Looked at from this view-point, Upaniṣad may be said to fulfil rather than 'destroy the ritualistic portion of the Veda. The only conclusion, therefore, justifiable in these circumstances, is to regard Advaita and the Buddhistic views as interpretations of their respective sources of inspiration quite independent of each other, to wit, the Vedas comprehending Upaniṣads on the one hand, and Nikāyas and Sūtras venerated as the word of Buddha on the other.

5. Āgama And Reason

Consistent with the above contention is the fact that Gauḍapāda and Nāgārjuna appeal to their own traditional teaching for support of their systems. Śaṅkara the commentator of Gauḍapāda's Prakaraṇas, insists that Advaita is realised through reason as well as *Āgama*. It is significant that he begins his commentary on each chapter with some reference to *Āgama*. I have already stated that the word *Āgama* in this connection means not authorita-

tive Śāstra, but the right way of traditional teaching. Candrakīrti likewise seems to be anxious to point out Nāgārjuna as the correct interpreter of the Bauddha traditional teaching. He extols Nāgārjuna's work as specially devoted to the skilful distinction between Sūtras of primary and secondary import.¹ He draws our attention to the fact that Nāgārjuna has not only given (Yukti) reasons but adduced *Āgama* texts as well. And he himself quotes freely from the relevant authorities at the end of each chapter of his *Mādhyamaka Vṛtti*.

It is evident from the above that call to tradition as well as reason is common to both Gauḍapāda and Nāgārjuna. But then there is this difference in the order of their appeal, which stares us in the face. For Gauḍapāda it is *Āgama* first and reason next ; for Nāgārjuna it is reason first and then *Āgama*. It will be recalled how Gauḍapāda's very first chapter is called '*Āgama Prakaraṇa*', and then the remaining chapters are supposed to give prominence to reasoning. Nāgārjuna, on the other hand, states his reason first of all in each of his chapters for rejecting certain views and then cites some Buddha's teaching in corroboration of his statement. The net result of this difference is that Gauḍapāda takes his stand upon an indubitable fact of experience suggested by the Śruti - the intuitional experience of the three states - and employs reason only to explain the apparent contradictions involved in its manifestation, whereas Nāgārjuna trusts the dictates of pure unaided reason and engages it in self-criticism, a task too much above its capacity, for it can never be expected to overstep itself.

1. समाप्तं चेदं मध्यमकशास्त्रम् सकललोकलोकोत्तरप्रवचननीतनेयार्थव्याख्याननैपुण्यविशारदमिति (Colophon. Ma. Vr).

Before closing our reflections on *Āgama*, it is necessary to remember one more point in this connection. Both Gauḍapāda and Nāgārjuna lay emphasis on particular texts of their *Āgama* and consider them to be of ultimate import and subordinate other texts to them. Texts of primary importance are called 'Nītārtha' by the Mādhyamika and 'Niścita' and 'Yuktiyukta' by Gauḍapāda. We shall have occasion to enter into the details of the principle involved in this interpretation later on when we take up Śaṅkara's interpretation of Gauḍapāda.

6. Two Different Types Of Reasoning

Lest I be accused of an over-hasty judgment in the matter, I invite the reader to compare the two different types of reasoning used by these two thinkers. For Nāgārjuna, reason has the sole function of examining the different possible views of phenomena and then pronouncing its judgement. He confines himself to the phenomena of the waking state and comes to the astounding conclusion that things are without any nature of their own. To make my statement more explicit, I shall allow myself a little digression here. It is well-known that Buddha laid great emphasis on his teaching of *Pratītya Samutpāda*. In the *Āryaśālistamba Sūtra* he is made to say यो भिक्षवः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादं पश्यति स धर्मं पश्यति यो धर्मं पश्यति स बुद्धं पश्यति । “Whoever sees *Pratītyasamutpāda*, he sees the Dharma ; and whoever sees the Dharma, he sees the Buddha”.¹ This is an oft-quoted *Āgama* text in Buddhist literature. *Pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination) is a

1. ASS p. 2 restored and edited by Pandit Ayyaswami Śāstri, Madras.

theory expressed by the formula अस्मिन् सतीदं भवति 'This being there, this follows.' It means that *avidyā*, *samskāra*, *viññāna*, *nāma-rūpa*, *sadāyatana*, *sparsa*, *vedanā*, *trṣṇā*, *upādāna*, *bhāva*, *jāti*, and *jarāmaraṇa* together form a chain of twelve links of causes and effects.¹ In accordance with this the Abhidhārmika system of Sarvāstitva vādins believed that nothing came into being without particular causes and conditions (*hetu-pratyaya*). The word *Pratītyasamutpāda* literally means origin as conditioned by necessary causes. These (*Pratyayas*) conditions are four in number, *hetu* (direct cause), *samanantara* (immediate cause), *ālambana* (objective cause of mental processes), and *adhipati* (additional or invariable antecedent).² That Buddha really intended to teach the course of suffering and proposed a remedy therefor, is not only well known from the history of his life, but has been universally recognized by Buddhists themselves. This is attested by the oft-quoted gāthā ये घर्मा हेतुप्रभवा हेतुं तेषां तथागतो ह्यवदत् । तेषां च यो निरोध एवादी सहाश्रमाणः (APSS)³ To Nāgārjuna, however, *Pratītya Samutpāda* meant a very different thing. He says in the opening verses of his *Mādhyamaka Śāstra* :

अनिरोधमनुत्पादमनुच्छेदमशाश्वतम् ।

अनेकार्थमनानार्थमनागममनिर्गमम् ॥

1. For details see *Pratītya-Samutpāda-Vibhanga Sūtra* restored into Samskr̥ta and edited by Pandit Ayyaswamy Śāstri, Madras.

2. For details on this subject see SBT by Yāmakāmi Sojen pp. 309-315.

3. *Āryapratītya Samutpādanāma Māhayāna Sūtra*, restored into Samskr̥ta and edited by Pandit Ayyaswamy Śāstry, Madras.

यः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शिवम् ।

देशयामास संबुद्धस्तं वन्दे वदतां वरम् ॥

According to this interpretation, Buddha's teaching implies no annihilation, no origination; no destruction, no permanence; no unity, no diversity; no coming in, no going out. This corollary is deduced from Buddha's *Pratītya samutpāda* itself, or rather, that is the teaching intended by Buddha according to Nāgārjuna who lays special emphasis on the word *Pratītya* : प्रतीत्य यद्यद्भवति न हि तावत्तदेव तत् । न चान्यदपि तत्तस्मान्नोच्छिन्नं नापि शाश्वतं ॥ (MK 18-10) 'Whatever appears as something relative to something else, surely it cannot be that very thing, nor can it be something other than that. Hence there is nothing destroyed.'

To illustrate the procedure of the Mādhyamika reasoning, I shall take up the refutation of the cause-and-effect relation. It will be recollected that we were unable to go all the way with Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya who supposes Gauḍapādācārya to have approved of the *ajātivāda* of the Buddhists. I have already touched upon some of the difficulties that his hypothesis has to encounter. Here I am mainly concerned with the method of reasoning that Nāgārjuna employs in his refutation of causation. This is how he argues against origination as such :

न स्वतो नापि परतो न द्वाभ्यां नाप्यहेतुतः ।

उत्पन्ना जातु विद्यन्ते भावाः क्वचन केचन ॥ - MK 1-1.

Again

न स्वतो जायते भावः परतो नैव जायते ।

न स्वतः परतश्चैव जायते जायते कुतः ॥ - MK 21-13

A thing cannot be conceived to be born of its own accord, or out of another ; neither from both of these nor without any causes. How can there be any real origination when this is found impossible in any one of the alternative ways in which the relation between cause and effect may be conceived ? Another work ascribed to Nāgārjuna makes this line of argument still more explicit ;

भावाभावान्न जन्मास्ति तस्य भावस्य चासतः ।

जन्मादानं संभवति नित्यभावोऽस्ति भाव्यते ॥

तादृशी भावना भ्रान्तिराकाशपुष्पसन्निभा ।

धर्मता हि न भस्तुल्या खसमं तस्य जन्म च ॥

भवसङ्क्रान्ति सूत्र. १-२

There is no independent entity ; hence there is no origination. That the positive entity can take birth out of nothing, that there is an eternal entity which can be born - an idea like this, is only an illusion, just like the sky-flower. The essence of things, indeed, is like empty space, its birth is like empty space (BS 1-2). The heart of the Mādhyamika argument is : यः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादः शून्यतां तां प्रचक्ष्महे 'That which is known, as dependent origination, we call Śūnyatā (void)'. (MK 24-18). The critique of becoming is also the critique of being. अप्रतीत्यसमुत्पन्नो धर्मः कश्चिन्न विद्यते । यस्मात्तस्मादशून्यो हि धर्मः कश्चिन्न विद्यते 'There is nothing which is not born relatively, whence it follows that there can be nothing which is not void' (MK 24-19). And Nāgārjuna quotes Buddha's utterances from different Nikāyas referring to the transitory nature of things, and says that Śūnyatā is implied in those texts. In a text in

the Majjhima Nikāya (3-4-10 Dialogue No. 140) for instance, Buddha says “That is unreal (mṛṣā) which is of a fleeting nature (moṣa dharma), i.e. Nirvāṇa which is not of a fleeting nature”. On this statement Nāgārjuna remarks :

तन्मृषा मोषधर्म यद्यदि किं तत्र मुष्यते ।

एतच्छूनं भगवता शून्यतापरिदीपकम् ॥ (MK 13-2)

“If that which is of a fleeting nature is unreal, what is it that is fleeting here ? Evidently this saying of the Lord reveals Śūnyatā (essencelessness of things).”

Gauḍapāda's reasoning is totally different from all this. As I have said before, he strictly follows the tribasic method of Vedānta. He finds that the witnessing consciousness present in all the three states is an entity which we cannot help looking upon as our own self while in deep sleep it remains as one condensed and indivisible consciousness (ghanaprajñāḥ) into which all diversity of objects has been rolled into one, as it were (ekībhūtaḥ). It manifests itself as the ego outwardly conscious (bahīḥ prajñāḥ) in waking, and inwardly conscious (antahprajñāḥ) in dream, of a world which is the non-ego (GK 1-1). Looked at from the standpoint of the waking ego, we are for ever ignorant of the existence of an immutable witnessing principle in us. We are not only perfectly in the dark about it in all the three states, but go to the length of misconstruing it as an ego placed in a world of plurality. From the standpoint of intuition, however, - and intuition alone has the right to be consulted with regard to the experience of the three states - matters look in a different light altogether. The mass of consciousness in sleep, or rather, Pure Consciousness without any distinc-

tions, remains intact as the witness both in waking and dream, and at the same time seemingly transforms itself into a world of distinctions internal and external with reference to the ego. How Pure Consciousness can stand changeless in its nature and also manifest itself as the manifold world at the same time, may not be intelligible to the waking mind, but it is nevertheless an undeniable fact of experience. That this manifestation has not really affected the integrity of Ātman as Pure Consciousness can be verified from the fact that whenever waking changes into deep sleep, He remains in his pristine purity. Evidently then, argues Gauḍapāda, Ātman is neither really changed into the ego and non-ego in the waking and the dream states, nor dissolved into one mass of consciousness in sleep. That he is conscious in waking and dream and unconscious in sleep, is itself the result of a misconception arising from our ignorance of the true nature of our Ātman who is Turiya or the fourth in relation to his illusory forms in the three states.

“Only when the individual soul awakes from its beginningless illusory sleep, it comes to realise the Absolute unborn, sleepless and dreamless” (GK 1-16). This Kārikā has been quoted once before, but it bears repetition in this connection also. The ‘sleep’ referred to here is the ignorance of Pure Consciousness as which our real self ever remains, and the ‘dream’ is but the seeing a world of duality in Ātman where it is not. Now the kārikā says that when a person awakes to the truth, he realises there neither this sleep nor this dream from the standpoint of the intuition of Turiya, the real Ātman. (1-14). It is a mistake and confusion of two different view-

points, the viewpoint of intuition and that of the intellect restricted to the waking, which is responsible for the attribution of sleep and dream to Ātman. विपर्यासे तयोः क्षीणे तुरीयं पदमस्नुते (GK 1-15). One has taken one's stand in the ever-luminous Turiya, when one is free from this double misconception.

What does it all come to ? Gauḍapāda's critique of being is the key to his critique of becoming. Ātman as pure consciousness is at once the source of the conceptions of being and knowing in the empirical world. His being and consciousness are not of the empirical sort ; they are absolute, not relative to anything else as Nāgārjuna would contend. Ātman is Aja, unborn, without any change whatsoever. Change implies time and space which are restricted to waking and dream, whereas Ātman transcends both, as may be verified by a reference to sleep experience. Ātman, no doubt, does seem to have changed into a duality of the ego and the non-ego in waking and dream; but that must be regarded only as an illusory change, since Ātman does not suffer any modification thereby. To the intellect it appears to be a self-contradiction to maintain that an entity conserves its nature while it also changes into something else. But when the possibility of even this feat for Ātman is vouched for by intuition, we have to reconcile ourselves to this fact of experience and modify our notion about the waking intellect by restricting its rigorous laws to the facts of waking experience. Hence Gauḍapāda does not hesitate to declare with Upaniṣads नेह नानेति चाम्नायादिन्द्रो मायाभिरित्यपि । अजायमानो बहुधा मायया जायते तु सः ॥ “We have to conclude that

He, Ātman, is born only māyically, illusionarily as it were, for the Śruti declares 'There is no duality here,': 'Indra (Ātman) appears to be many through his māyās', 'He is born as many though really unborn' (GK 3-24).

7. The Aim And Nature Of Reason In The Vedānta And The Mādhyamika Systems

It is important to note that not only with regard to the place and scope of reason, but also about its aim and even its very nature, there is palpable disparity between the two systems. Critical reason reigns supreme in Nāgārjuna's system. It is a plenipotentary principle that can function even against itself. As Prof. Mūrti has tersely put it, 'Reason occupies at once the position of the judge and the accused brought before the tribunal' (CPB p. 146). Nāgārjuna does not undertake to give any pronouncement on the ultimate nature of reality. He has a dialectic which amounts to criticism and final banishment of all theories (सर्वदृष्टीनां निःसरणम् MK 13-8). His is Śūnyavāda or the doctrine of the essencelessness of things. He proposes to consider and disprove all possible views of reality-being, non-being, being and non-being together, and neither being nor non-being. By an analysis of each those alternatives he tries to drive each theorist to a conviction of the self-contradictory nature of his position.

Gauḍapāda, on the other hand, is anxious to follow Śrutis very closely, for they are, as he thinks, the one unimpeachable source of Vedāntic thought. To his mind, they contain nothing that is incompatible with reason or unverifiable by experience. They provide us with a full view of life through the intuition of the three states, an intuition which transcends the limitation of the waking

intellect. He recognises that reason has the power to question and criticise theories but according to him, with respect to facts of experience, it can only coordinate and assess their relative worth. And in the investigation of truth and reality, he thinks, the latter is the only legitimate function with which it can be entrusted. He therefore, makes this use of reason in accordance with the suggestion of the Śruti to systematize it and tries to amplify it with additional arguments and illustrations in consonance with that teaching. Even when drawing upon other sources such as the Mahāyāna works for the latter purpose, he has taken care to see that reason is kept within its permissible limits. Thus when he talks of the *Catuṣkoṭis*, the four different viewpoints available to speculators, he says कोट्यश्चतस्र एतास्तु ग्रहैर्यासां सदाऽऽवृतः । भगवानाभिरस्पृष्टो येन दृष्टः स सर्वदृक् । (GK 4-83), “It is ; it is not ; is and is not ; neither is, nor is not’ - he who has seen that Glorious One untouched by these four one-sided viewpoints, points by which He seems to be forever obscured, he verily is the all-seer”.¹ Gauḍapāda here affirms the possibility of intuiting reality beyond all veiling and thus attain an all comprehensive vision in contrast with the self-stultifying desperate negation of all things by means of the critical intellect. For fear of prolixity I have refrained from multiplying such examples. Readers

1. In keeping with this position, Gauḍapāda’s repudiation of all causation in 4-22 (स्वतो वा परतो वापि) must be distinguished from a seemingly similar repudiation in the Mādhyamika Kārikā (1-1) already quoted, for our author is trying throughout his work to make out a case for Ātman as an unborn immortal entity (अजातो ह्यमृतो धर्मः ४-६).

interested in the subject are referred to the Saṃskṛta Māṇḍūkya-
R a h a s y a - V i v ṛ t i .

8. The Absolute According To Gauḍapāda

The Absolute of Advaita Vedānta is often con-
founded with that of the Mādhyamika systems. Gauḍapāda
has been alternately credited with having taught the self-
same doctrine as that of the Vijñānavādin with very little
difference¹ or that of the Mādhyamikas in a modified
form.² It has been even suspected that he was himself a
Buddhist.³ His cryptic style of exposition besprinkled with
Buddhistic terms, has earned for his followers the oppro-
brious epithets of Māyāvādins⁴, Buddhists in disguise⁵
from non-advaitic Vedāntins. Amidst so much confusion,
conjecture and misconception, it is very refreshing to note
that Prof. T.R.V. Mūrti has boldly made his unequivocal

1. See *Āgama Śāstra*, Introduction, p.p, cxxxii onwards.

2. "The Alātaśanti of Gauḍapāda's Kārikas is full of
Mādhyamika tenets."

"The Advaitic distinction of Vyavahāra or experience and
Paramārtha or reality corresponds to the samvṛti and the Paramārtha
of the Mādhyamika, The Nirguṇa Brahman of Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna's
Śūnya have much in common," *Indian Philosophy* by Prof. S.
Rādhākṛiṣṇan, Vol I p. 668,

3. "I believe that there is sufficient evidence in his Kārikas
for thinking that he was possibly himself a Buddhist, and considered
that the teachings of the Upaniṣads tallied with those of Buddha,"

- *History of Indian Philosophy* by Prof. S. N. Dāsgupta, Vol
I p, 423,

4. विगीतं विच्छिन्नमूलं माहायानिकबौद्धगाथितं मायावादं व्यावर्णयन्तो लोकान् व्यामोहयन्ति ॥
- *Bhāṣkara Bhāṣya* p. 84 on Vedānta Sūtras.

5. अनाद्यविद्यावशाच्च समारोपितावास्तवग्राहकविकल्पोल्लेखिनी स्वयंप्रकाशा संविदेव
परमार्थसती सैव आत्मेति सौगताः प्रकटाः प्रच्छन्नाश्च ॥ -Siddhi Traya of Yāmūnācārya
p, 19

statement in his learned work, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* : “If we carefully analyse their respective standpoints, we would find that all these three agree with regard to the logical *form* of the absolute, as free of empirical determinations and as the essence of phenomena and also as realised in an intuitive experience. But they differ with regard to the nature of the absolute (that with which they identify it) and the mode of their approach. It can only make for confusion to ignore the differences” (CPB. p. 116). I am glad to be able to say that I wholeheartedly subscribe to this statement. I would fain hope that the reader who has followed the train of reasoning in the preceding pages would readily concur with me in saying so.

I fail to see, however, eye to eye with the Professor when he makes this categorical statement : “Brahman is the Absolute of Pure Being ; and the method of approach is from the standpoint of knowledge. Vijñāptimātratā is pure act (Transcendental Ideation), and the approach is from the standpoint of the will consciousness. Śūnyatā is Prajñā, non-dual Intuition, and the approach is from the standpoint of philosophical reflection, or criticism.” (CBP. p. 326). Certain qualifications seem to be necessary at least with regard to the first and the third absolutisms. We have seen that the Vedāntic Absolute of Gauḍapāda is the Turiya, non-dual principle best described as ‘स एष नेतिनेत्यात्मा’ (GK 3-26) ‘This Self which is not this, not that’, indescribable as being, knowing or otherwise. The method of approach again, is from the standpoint of, not mere knowledge, but that of reason nourished by the universal intuition of the three states. As for Śūnyata, I

am yet to be convinced that it is identical with *Prajñā-Pāramitā*. I have stated my reasons for this hesitancy in the course of my Samskrta commentary on the Kārikās, especially in connection with the discussion regarding the Śūnyavāda (4-28). But I wish to draw the attention of the reader to two important points here. In the first place, neither Nāgārjuna nor his commentators seem to vouch for this identification of Śūnyatā with Prajñā in any of their writings. In *Vigraha Vyavartani* as in the Mādhyamika Kārikās, Nāgārjuna defines Śūnyatā as *Pratītya Samutpāda*, which amounts to essencelessness. यश्च प्रतीत्यभावो भावानां शून्यतेति सा ह्युक्ता । प्रतीत्य यत्र भावो भवति हि तस्यास्वभावत्वम् (VV p. 22) His illustration¹ of a man conjured up by yōgic power or magic aptly illustrates the doctrine of essenceless ness. निर्मितको निर्मितकं मायापुरुषः स्वमायया सृष्टम् । प्रतिषेधयते यद्वत् प्रतिषेधोऽयं तथैव स्यात् (VV 23) Nāgārjuna's explanation of this Kārikā more than bears it out. एवमेव मद्वचनेन शून्येन सर्वभावानां स्वभावप्रतिषेध उपपन्नः । 'So also my word which is void of essence can very well negate the essence of all things'.

It has been held that the word Śūnya has a double signification, and that it does not mean nissvabhāva (having no nature of its own), as applied to the absolute or ultimate reality. But we have no voucher from Nāgārjuna for this contention either. On the other hand, we find the *prajñā-pāramitā* itself expressly recommended in Mahāyāna

1. It is interesting to note that the illustrations of *Māyā*, *Swapna*, and *Nairmitaka* - mean two very different things for the Mādhyamika and Gauḍapāda. For the former they convey an idea of the essencelessness of things, while for the latter that of the appearance of a real substrate.

works to be contemplated as *pratītya samutpannā* (originating relatively), *niṣṣvabhāṇā* (essenceless) and *māyōpama* (an appearance produced by a magician). Here is an important passage culled from the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* to this effect :

उदयव्ययशून्यत्वात् नास्त्यात्मेति विभावयन्नात्माभिनिवेशं परित्यज्य, तद्विविक्तस्वभावं स्कन्धादिकं प्रतीत्यसमुत्पन्नमुदयव्ययधर्मकं समुपलभ्य, नीलतद्वियोः सहोपलम्भनियमात् चित्तमात्रमेवेदं न बाह्यार्थोऽस्तीति मनसि कुर्वन्, अपरित्यक्त-ग्राहकाकारचित्ताभिनिवेशो बाह्यार्थाभिनिवेशं तिरस्कृत्य, ग्राह्याभावे ग्राहकाभाव इति निध्यायंस्तामपि ग्राहकाकारलक्षणां विज्ञप्तिमात्रतामवधूय, अद्वयज्ञानमेव केवलं भावतो भावरूपमिति निश्चित्य, तदपि प्रतीत्यसमुत्पन्नत्वात् मायावन्निःस्वभावं तत्त्वतोऽपगतैकान्तभावाभावादि परामर्शरूपमिति भावयन्, भावनाबलनिष्पत्तौ केषां-चिन्मणिरूपादिज्ञानयदुत्सारितसकलभ्रान्तिनिमित्ताया मायोपमात्मप्रतिभासधियो निर्विकल्पायाः कथं चित्प्रत्यात्मवेद्यायाः समुत्पादे ज्ञेयावरणं सम्यग्योगी प्रजह्यात् (AAA pp. 498-499). Another relevant passage may be cited from the same source. Commenting on the *Aṣṭā Sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Haribhadra compares not only *Prajñāpāramitā* but also *nirvāṇa* and everything else beyond it, if there be any such, to *māya* and dream. यत्र हि नाम निर्वाणमपि प्रतिविशिष्टं धर्मकायमद्वयज्ञानस्वभावं मायास्वप्नसमानं वदामि तत्र किं पुनरन्यं धर्मं रूपकायं न वदामि ? यदि निर्वाणादपि कश्चिदन्यो विशिष्टतरो धर्मः संभवेत् तदा तमपि धर्मं मायादिसदृशं वदेयमिति ॥ (AAA p. 144).

In these circumstances, I think that unless we are prepared to go beyond the professed doctrines of either thought-system, we are driven to the conclusion that while the form of the Absolute appears to be the same in both in so far as it transcends all thought and speech,

Gauḍapāda repeatedly declares in so many words that it is something unborn, beyond the sleep of ignorance, and beyond the dream of knowing a second to itself अजमनिद्र-मस्वप्नम् (GK 1-16, 3-36, 4-81), that it is the changeless (tattva) essence of all the world of experience both within and without us, and indeed of our very self (सकृद्विभातं सर्वज्ञम् GK 2-38), and that it is an ever-effulgent all-consciousness (GK 3-36, 4-81). The absolute of the Mādhyamika is Śūnyatā or relative origination, beyond all multiplicity, the golden mean of knowledge : यः शून्यतां प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादं मध्यमां प्रतिपदमनेकार्थम् । निजगाद प्रणमामि तमप्रतिमसंबुद्धम् (VV 72). In a word, his is a supra-mental philosophy failing to see anything positive, negative or even neutral which can be rightly characterized as the essence of things. He considers it only proper to suspend his judgment in the matter. The means of approach, as I have said before, is reason aided by the intuition of the three states on the one side, and critical reason restricted to the waking state on the other.

9. Truth And Reality

The doctrine of two truths, again, illustrates the striking difference between the two systems in point of the application of reason. For the Mādhyamika Śūnyatā is the absolute reality and truth in one (paramārtha satya), whereas for Gauḍapāda the Advaita Turiya-Ātman transcending all the states of consciousness is that *Paramārtha*. *Samvṛti* or veiled truth is, according to the Mādhyamika what appears as such to the uncritical mind of the common man, while for Gauḍapāda it is paramārtha as it

appears from the standpoint of empirical consciousness restricted to the waking state. Each of the two thinkers believes that empirical life remains scatheless by his doctrine of the absolute and that everything empirical or transcendental can be explained on that basis, यस्य शून्यतेयं प्रभवति तस्य सर्वार्थाः लौकिकलोकोत्तराः प्रभवन्ति । (Nāgārjuna's own Vṛtti on his VV 71) 'सर्वे चेह तु सर्वदा' (GK 2-28), 'कल्पयेत्सोऽविशङ्कितः' (GK 2-30), 'द्वैतं तद्वेद इष्यते' (GK 3-18). Although the Absolute in itself is beyond thought and speech both the Mādhyamika and Gauḍapāda believe that it can be both taught and caught by means of an assumed suggestive language : 'श्रूयते देश्यते चापि समारोपादनक्षरः' (Buddha's saying quoted in MKV by Candrakīrti p. 94), अजः 'कल्पितसंवृत्त्या' (GK 4-74).

Section Four

Gauḍapāda And Certain Samskr̥ta Works

1. Gauḍapāda's Alleged Indebtedness To Other Works

We have now fairly done with the supposed borrowing from Mahāyāna sources. The torch of Vedāntic truth is seen to shine all the better for the shaking. There have been other allegations of borrowing too, though less formidable. Some scholars have thought that Gauḍapāda's Kārikās show signs of borrowing from *Paramārthasāra* of Śeṣa, *Yōgavasiṣṭha*¹, *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*.

1. For details see Āgama Śāstra, Introduction p p, lxxix to lxxxviii. where Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya has thoroughly examined and confuted the case for the alleged borrowing.

But the arguments put forward do not seem to have passed beyond the stage of conjecture based on a very few similarities of language and thought. I do not, therefore, think it necessary to consider them in detail.

2. Other Works Ascribed To Gauḍapāda

Gauḍapāda has been credited with the authorship of a Bhāṣya on the *Sāṅkhyakārikās*, of one on the *Uttaragītā* and of some two or three books more. But we have no positive evidence to show that they are his genuine works. Nor does a comparison of the style of writing in these works with that of the *Kārikās* betray anything to the purpose. We have therefore, to rest satisfied with the impression that they are most probably not the production of the author of the *Māṇḍūkya kārikās*.

Section Five

Gauḍapāda In Subsequent Writings

1. Gauḍapāda And Śaṅkara

How far have Śaṅkara and other advaitic writers followed Gauḍapāda ? Have they demurred to any of his teachings ? This is a question which we have to settle, if only to make ourselves sure that later Vedāntins smelt no danger of Buddhistic influence in that teacher's thoughts. Prof. V. Bhaṭṭācārya observes that "some of the most remarkable doctrines as discussed and established by Gauḍapāda have not been appreciated in subsequent works on the Vedānta even of the Advaita School" (AS Int. p. cxlv). This would be surely a serious charge if it could be substantiated. The Professor complains that even Śaṅkara

does not appear to subscribe to certain doctrines of this teacher. He cites the peculiar conception of Brahman, the *Ajātivāda*, the *Sarvajñatāvāda* (GK 85,89) and the *Vijñānavāda* as instances in point. We have already disposed of the so-called *Vijñānavāda* and the alleged approval of the Buddhists as not true to fact. With that the *Sarvajñatāvāda* must go too, being a member of the same brood. But what about the nature of Brahman and the *Ajātivāda* ? The Professor refers to the Kārikā यदा न लीयते चित्तं न च विक्षिप्यते पुनः । अनिङ्गनमनाभासं निष्पन्नं ब्रह्म तत्तदा (GK 3-46) and interprets Gauḍapāda to mean that “Brahman is nothing but the *Citta* which by *Nirōdha* is *anidra*” (AS cxxxvi). He believes that this points on one side to the Sāṅkhya doctrine of Draṣṭṛ or Puruṣa resting in himself, and on the other to the resting of the *Citta* in the *Vijñaptimātratā* of the Yōgācāras or Vijñānavādins (AS p. cxxxvii). Now this is really to give the dog an ill name and then hang him. That Gauḍapāda is quite innocent of the doctrine imputed to him, would be clear from a reference to the whole context (GK 3-22 to 3-46) at the close of which the verse occurs. This woeful misunderstanding of the text is, I fear, largely the result of the scorn with which the Professor has dis-countenanced the traditional commentary of Śaṅkara on the one hand, and his pre-conceived theory that *Vijñānavāda* has been imported into Gauḍapāda’s work on the other. I earnestly appeal to the impartial reader to institute a comparison between my *Māṇḍūkya Rahasya Vivṛti* which is an amplification of Śaṅkara Bhāṣya with the professor’s English Annotation or Samskrta Vṛtti and then adjudge the case with reference to this issue.

As to the *Ajātivāda*, why, that is the very core of Vedāntic teaching which Śaṅkara would be the last to ignore at his peril, I shall call to witness an extract from the *Sūtra Bhāṣya* which embodies Śaṅkara's considered statement on this subject. Śaṅkara is there answering an objection from a Vedāntin who thinks that Brahman undergoes real modification during the process of creation. I reproduce it in extenso and then give a free translation. ननु मृदादिदृष्टान्तप्रणयनात् परिणामवद् ब्रह्म शास्त्रस्याभिमतमिति गम्यते । परिणामिनो हि मृदादयोऽर्था लोके समधिगता इति । नेत्युच्यते । 'स वा एष महानज आत्माऽजरोऽमरोऽमृतोऽभयो ब्रह्म' (४-४-२२), 'स एष नेति नेत्यात्मा' (बृ. ३-९-२६), 'अस्थूलमनणु' (बृ. ३-८-८) - इत्याद्याभ्यः सर्वविक्रियाप्रतिषेधश्रुतिभ्यो ब्रह्मणः कूटस्थत्वावगमात् । न ह्येकस्य ब्रह्मणः परिणामधर्मत्वं तद्ब्रहितत्वं च शक्यं प्रतिपत्तुम् । (सू. भा. २-१-१४) "It might be urged that the Śāstra by implication favours the doctrine of modifiable Brahman since it brings forward examples of clay and other objects which are known from experience to undergo material modification. This, we reply, cannot be accepted, because Brahman is known to be absolutely beyond modification from a number of Śrutis which negate all change in it. Such Śrutis, for instance, as these : "This great unborn Self, undecaying, undying, immortal, fearless, is indeed Brahman' (Br. 4-4-25). 'And this is Ātman described as not such, not such, (Br. 3-9-26). 'Neither gross nor subtle' (Br. 3-8-86). It is certainly impossible to conceive that one and the same Brahman is at once capable of modification and free from it" (S. Bh. 2-1-14). But Brahma-Sūtras, and Śaṅkara with them, accepted causality and actually enunciated, in unmistakable terms, the theory of Satkāryavāda

which believes in the existence of the effect in its cause before its production. Does not this militate against the absolute of *Ajātivāda* ? This criticism ignores the fact that Gauḍapāda himself taught the *Māyā-Jātivāda* as well as the *Satkāryavāda* (GK. 1-6, 1-7, 2-12, 3-10, 3-24, 3-27). Śaṅkara does no more than closely follow in his footsteps in dilating upon the doctrine without in anyway jeopardizing the doctrine of *Ajāti*. Here is a passage which makes Śaṅkara's position clear in this regard :

नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्तस्वरूपात् सर्वज्ञात् सर्वशक्तेरीश्वरात् जगज्जनिस्थितिप्रलया नाचेतना-
 त्प्रधानादन्यस्माद्वा, इत्येषोऽर्थः प्रतिज्ञातः 'जन्माद्यस्य यतः' (वे. सू. १-१-२)
 इति । सा प्रतिज्ञा तदवस्थैव न तद्विरुद्धोऽर्थः पुनरिहोच्यते । कथं नोच्यतेऽत्यन्तमात्मनः
 एकत्वमद्वितीयत्वं च ब्रुवता ? श्रुणु यथा नोच्यते । सर्वज्ञस्येश्वरस्याऽऽत्मभूत
 इवाविद्याकल्पिते नामरूपे तत्त्वान्यत्वाभ्या-मनिर्वचनीये संसारप्रपञ्चबीजभूते
 सर्वज्ञस्येश्वरस्य माया, शक्तिः, प्रकृतिः - इति च श्रुति-स्मृत्योरभिलष्येते ।
 ताभ्यामन्यः सर्वज्ञ ईश्वरः 'आकाशो वै नामरूपयोर्निर्वहिता । ते यदन्तरा तद् ब्रह्म'
 (छा. ८-१४-६) इति श्रुतेः । 'नामरूपे व्याकरवाणि' (छा. ६-३-२), 'सर्वाणि
 रूपाणि विचित्य धीरः नामानि कृत्वाऽभिवदन् यदास्ते' (तै. आ. ३-१२-७),
 'एकं बीजं बहुधा यः करोति' (श्वे. ६-१२) इत्यादि श्रुतिभ्यश्च ॥ (सू. भा.
 २-१-१४) "In the Sūtra 'Janmādyasya yataḥ' (1-1-2) we
 have laid down the proposition that the origination,
 sustentation and the re-absorption of the world are due to
 the eternally pure, conscious, omniscient and omnipotent
 naturally free Lord and not from any unconscious entity
 like the *Pradhāna*. That proposition remains intact and we
 do not teach here anything contrary to it.

(Objection) : How can you say that you do not contradict it, even while maintaining that the Self is absolutely one without a second ?

(Reply) : Listen how we do not contradict it. Name and form conjured up by ignorance as though they were identical with the omniscient Lord but undefinable either as identical with or different from Him, being the seed of the phenomenal world, are called illusion (māyā), potential power (Śakti) and causal nature (prakṛti) of that Omniscient Lord. That Omniscient Lord, however, is distinct from them according to the Śrutis” (S. Bh. 2-1-14).

The above lengthy quotation ought to be sufficient to convince us that *Brahmasūtras*, according to Śāṅkara, teach only māyic causality and no real modification of Brahman. The following is another passage in confirmation of this conclusion : अविद्याकल्पितेन च नामरूपलक्षणेन रूपभेदेन व्याकृताव्याकृतात्मकेन तत्त्वान्यत्वाभ्यामनिर्वचनीयेन ब्रह्म परिणामादिसर्वव्यवहारास्पदत्वं प्रतिपद्यते । पारमार्थिकेन च रूपेण सर्वव्यवहारातीतमवतिष्ठते ॥

(सू. भा. २-१-२७) “Brahman becomes the object of all these notions such as modification in its particular aspect determined by name and form both differentiated and non-differentiated, conjured up by avidyā ; name and form undefinable as one with or other than It. In Its real nature, however, It remains beyond all *vyavahāra* (of thought and speech) and unmodified.” (S. Bh. 2-1-27).

And Śāṅkara the commentator on Māṇḍūkya kārikās, even granting for the nonce that he is different from the commentator on the Sūtras, has been careful to keep up this tradition when he explains Gauḍapāda’s very first Kārikā on creation सतां विद्यमानानां स्वेनाविद्याकृतनामरूपमायास्वरूपेण सर्वभावानां विश्वतैजसप्राज्ञभेदानां प्रभव उत्पत्तिः (GK 1-6). “It is of the previously existent beings later differentiated into *viśva*, *taijasa* and *prājña*, that origination takes place in their

māyic form of name and form conjured up by avidyā.” Here is a lucid formulation of māyic origination and sātākāryavāda of which a sustained disquisition is to be met with throughout Gauḍapāda’s work. The entire commentary is well worth-studying from this stand-point.

2. Śaṅkara’s Distinct Contribution To Vedānta

Besides clarifying the theory of māyic causation, Śaṅkara has made for the first time a valuable contribution to Vedānta, or even to philosophic thought in general, for that matter, which demands an extra-ordinarily deep reflective mind to appreciate it. The generality of philosophers proceed on the supposition that by the use of the faculty of thinking they can analyse external objects and discover the truth about them. A few gifted thinkers have advanced a step further as they shifted the centre of philosophical interest from objects to the knowing mind itself. They have busied themselves with forms of thought to ascertain how far patterns of thought possible for the mind are competent to deliver the truth. But a more daring psychological analyst was needed to turn his attention towards the very fountain-head of thought, the thinker himself. How is thought made possible at all ? What is the least residual postulate to be taken for granted before we start as thinkers ? Going deep into the matter, Śaṅkara discovered that the waking ego - the pivot on which all waking life turns - is a mysterious metamorphosis which the witnessing self in us undergoes, as it were, by an undefinable fusion of the real and the unreal (सत्यानृते मिथुनीकृत्य). No one can take himself to be an ego without presuming at the same time that he owns a body together with the senses and the mind functioning

within it. And yet, strange to say, there remains, all the while, the fact that he is altogether free from shackles of this physico-psychic complex since he can shake them off and swim on with ease either to dream or to sound sleep. The witnessing principle which every one of us can, and does unconsciously, intuit and claim to be himself, is the only entity which can be regarded as real in the strict sense of the word ; for it is inconceivable that anyone can deny his own self on any occasion, the denier himself being that self आत्मनश्च प्रत्याख्यातुमशक्यात्वात् । य एव निराकर्ता तस्यैवात्मत्वात् (S. Bh. 1-1-4). And in comparison with that, everything else must be admitted to be unreal, inasmuch as it has no constant being of its own, independent of this witnessing self. For all practical purposes, however, people go on considering the ego as their real self, little aware that in that conception is a double error, that of identification of the real and the unreal coupled with a mistaken transference of the properties of each to the other. This mutual super-imposition of the nature and properties (अन्योन्यस्मिन्नन्योन्यात्मकतामन्योन्यधर्माश्चाध्यस्य) is what Śaṅkara calls *Avidyā* (ignorance) with which, he claims (Intr. S. Bh), all human life is infected - every sphere of thought, word and deed - whether pertaining to this or to the other world, or even to final release from life's bondage as revealed in the Vedas. तमेतमविद्याख्यमात्मानात्मनोरितराध्यासं पुरस्कृत्य सर्वे प्रमाणप्रमेयव्यवहारा लौकिका वैदिकाश्च प्रवृत्ताः सर्वाणि च शास्त्राणि विधिप्रतिषेधमोक्षपराणि । He makes a challenging statement that the witness as contrasted with the ego, the one uniform and unchanging self of all beings is never alluded to either in the Karmakāṇḍa of the Vedas or in the specu-

lative systems : न ह्यहंप्रत्ययविषयकर्तृव्यतिरेकेण तत्साक्षी सर्वभूतात्मा सम
 एकः कूटस्थनित्यः पुरुषो विधिक्काण्डे तर्कसमये वा केनचिदधिगतः सर्वस्याऽऽत्मा ।
 (S. Bh. 1-1-4). And in a revealing passage he says that
 the Śāstra is the final *pramāṇa*, because by removing the
 egohood of the seeker it annuls all notion of validity
 attaching to the concept of thinking and the thought, and
 reduces even itself into a no-*pramāṇa* just like a dream
pramāṇa which is sublated on waking : प्रमातृत्वं ह्यात्मनो निवर्त-
 यत्यन्त्यं प्रमाणम् । निवर्तयदेव चाप्रमाणीभवति स्वप्नकालप्रमाणमिव प्रबोधे ॥
 (G. Bh. 2-69).

The reader will note that the doctrine of two truths
 - *Samvṛti* or *vyāvahārika* *satya* and *paramārtha* *satya* -
 taught by Gauḍapāda has been thus shown by Śaṅkara to
 rest upon a solid foundation, since *samvṛti-satya* is al-
 lowed to reign supreme in its own sphere of the *pramāṇa*-
prameya relation without affecting the *paramārtha* in the
 least. It was necessary perhaps, to emphasize the aspect
 of *Vyāvahārika* *Satya* in view of Kumārila's opinion. The
 latter had argued that those who accorded no reality to
 external things or believed that they were only *samvṛti*-
satya, were not entitled to have any voice in the inves-
 tigation of *Dharma* or religious works, because these
 works could never be maintained to be efficacious with-
 out entailing belief in the reality of external objects. He
 had even inveighed against the doctrine of *samvṛti-satya*
 itself, stoutly resisting the notion that *samvṛti* which strictly
 means unreal, could ever be regarded as *Satya* or real
 संवृतेर्न तु सत्यत्वं सत्यभेदः कुतोऽन्वयम् । सत्यं चेत्संवृतिः कथं मृषा चेत्
 सत्यता कथम् ॥ (Nirālambanavāda p. 6). The Mahāyānist
 could easily get over the difficulty by retorting that

samvṛti-satya is only conventional truth, and thus really no truth at all. But this solution is not open to the Vedāntin who is as anxious to maintain the validity of the Veda alongwith other pramāṇas as the Mīmāṃsaka himself. Śaṅkara, therefore, demonstrates by his doctrine of Avidyā, how the validity of the pramāṇas including the Veda, is not in the least affected as long as Ātman is not realised (प्रमाणं त्वात्प्रतिश्चयात्). When, however, the spiritual aspirant awakes to the truth of paramārtha-satya, even Vedas including Upaniṣads, become no Vedas वेदा अवेदा इति वचनादिष्यत एवास्माभिः श्रुतेरप्यभावः प्रबोधे (S. Bh. 4-1-3).

Gauḍapāda could afford to do without the *adhyāsa vāda* because he directly applied the Vedāntic dialectic of the three avasthās to disclose the nature of the self as the witnessing principle which finally emerges as the Absolute or Turiya-ātman. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, being particularly interested in elaborating the māyic causality, lays particular emphasis on Adhyāsa or Avidyā so that with that useful tool in hand, he may be able to reconcile all the Vedic texts referring to creation, karma, upāsana as well as those that deal with the central doctrine of the unity of Ātman. He can go all the way with the Pūrvamīmāṃsakas and absorb all their exegetical principles with very little modification¹ to interpret the Vedic

1. The considerable amount of exegetical literature bearing upon the Karmakāṇḍa and the Jñānakāṇḍa including the two Mīmāṃsas was quite enough for Gauḍapāda as well as Śaṅkara to be able to apportion the various Adhikārins (qualified aspirants of various grades of intellect). The teaching in the Samanvaya-Sūtra coupled with the invaluable doctrine of Adhyāsa, could very well serve as an unfailing guide in graduating the relative values of texts. If this

texts so far as the Vyāvahārik standpoint based upon this principle of avidyā was concerned. Gauḍapāda had only indicated the lines of explaining texts dealing with the seeming origination of Jivas and other things in the Advaita Prakaraṇa ; he had laid down the rule निश्चितं युक्तियुक्तं च यत्तद्वदति नेतरत् ; that which is emphasized by the Śruti and supported by reasoning, that alone can be taken to be the true import of the Śrutis (GK 3-23). It remained for Śaṅkara to work out all the details of that dictum in the light of the Bramasūtras. There were of course many monistic schools which had produced their own commentaries on the Sūtras ; they had their theories of Avidyā too.¹ But we owe it to the exalted genius of Śaṅkara that the term Avidyā used in the Śruti as well as in the writings of previous Vedāntins, was made to shed its nebulous connotation and stand for superimposition, a concept of such supreme importance to metaphysics. This accounts for expressions like *Avidyātmaka*, *Avidyālakṣaṇa*, *Avidyākṛta*, *Avidyākālpita* and *Avidyāpratyupasthāpita*, which teem in his Bhāṣyas. And this explains too why, in important contexts of discussions touching causation, he repeats that the secondless Brahman is the cause of the world (Br. Bh. 2-1-24, 2-1-26), and why he says that the effect is non-different from the cause throughout the three divisions of time : न हि इदानीमपि कार्यं कारणात्मानमन्तरेण स्वतन्त्रमेवास्ति

be accepted, I think there was no need for a Vedāntin of Śaṅkara's type to draw his inspiration from the Mādhyamika for the interpretation of his texts or the analysis of thought.

1. We find references to some of these commentators and even short quotations from their vṛttis in the third varṇaka of the *Pañca-Pādikā*.

(S. Bh. 2-1-7), त्रिष्वपि कालेषु कार्यस्य कारणानन्यत्वं श्राव्यते (S. Bh. 2-1-9).

It is his full consciousness of the limitations of empirical reasoning that prompts Śaṅkara to make this significant remark about the right use of reasoning in Vedānta : यदपि श्रवणव्यतिरेकेण मननं विदधच्छब्द एव तर्कमप्यादर्तव्यं दर्शयतीत्युक्तम्, नानेन मिषेणशुष्कतर्कस्यात्राऽऽत्मलाभः संभवति । श्रुत्यनुगृहीत एव ह्यत्र तर्कोऽनुभवाङ्गत्वेनाऽऽश्रीयते । स्वप्नान्तबुद्धान्तयोरुभयोरितरेतरव्यभिचारादात्मनोऽनन्वागतत्वम्, संप्रसादे च प्रपञ्चपरित्यागेन सदात्माना संपत्तिः निष्प्रपञ्चसदात्मत्वम् प्रपञ्चस्य ब्रह्मप्रभवत्वात् कार्यकारणानन्यत्वन्यायेन ब्रह्माव्यतिरेक इत्येवंजातीयकः ॥ “As for the contention that scripture itself recommends the recognition of reason inasmuch as it enjoins reasoning (manana) in addition to mere listening (śravaṇa) to the śruti, it should be noted that no dry reasoning without experience to back it, can be admitted here on this plea. It is only reasoning suggested by the śruti itself that is here resorted to as leading to direct realisation. Such reasoning for instance as these : (1) As dream and waking are mutually exclusive, Ātman passing through both is un-attached to either ; and as in deep sleep the self becomes one with Pure Being, altogether leaving the world behind, this self is really the Pure Being free from the world. (2) Since the world is born of Brahman, it is not different from Brahman because of the principle of non-difference of the effect from the cause” (S. Bh. 2-1-6). This long extract is invaluable on two grounds. First it shows that Śaṅkara discountenances the use of pure reason for its own sake in matters of metaphysical importance, and secondly it states, in so

many words, that the śruti does not arbitrarily impose itself as an authority on the enquirer, but proposes to lead him to the highest truth by means of reasoning based on facts of experience. Accordingly, Śaṅkara declares, again and again, that in the enquiry into the nature of Brahman not only exegetical considerations such as śruti, but also experience, and reasoning (श्रुत्यादयोऽनुभवादयश्च S.B.1-1-2)¹ should be consulted because the knowledge of Brahman, unlike that of religious works, has to culminate in the intuition of reality : अनुभाववसानत्वात् ब्रह्मविद्यायाः । (1-1-2), अनुभवारूढमेव विद्याफलम् (3-2-18), अनुभवारूढं तु ज्ञानफलम् (3-3-32). It is quite in accordance with tradition that Śaṅkara expressly relates reasoning to the theory of causation as well as to the method of the three states as found in Gauḍapāda's Kārikās.

3. Gauḍapāda and Sureśvara

Sureśvara was a worthy disciple of a worthy master. He carried on the torch of Gauḍapāda's tribasic dialectic and māyic causation as handed to him by Śaṅkara, undiminished in its brilliance. This is how he frequently sums up the conclusion of the avasthātraya dialectic. अलुप्तदृष्टिरात्माऽयं यथोक्तः स्वप्नबोधयोः । प्राज्ञेऽपि च तथैवायं यद्वै तदिति वाक्यतः । अतिकारकहेतुश्च यथाऽऽत्मायं सुषुप्तिगः । कूटस्थदृष्टिमात्रत्वात् तथा स्वप्नप्रबोधयोः ॥ “Just as this Ātman is held to be possessed of a never-failing consciousness during dream and waking, so is he in Prājña state of sleep. And just as this Ātman transcends all motives and factors of action

1. This is in faithfulness to Gauḍapāda's dictum. निश्चितं युक्तियुक्तं च यत्तद्भवति नेतरत् (GK 3-26). See *Māṇḍūkya Rahasya Vivṛti* on that Kārikā.

in sound sleep, so does he in dream and waking too.” (Br. V. 4-3-1907, 1908). That is to say, Ātman is by nature ever the same Pure Consciousness beyond all change and changelessness. Again, Sureśvara cites Gauḍapāda’s Kārika containing the simile of a rope mistaken for a number of different things whenever (Br. V. pp. 510, 880) he speaks of causality, reminding us thereby that only māyic causality is meant.

It is interesting to note that monistic schools owing no allegiance to Śaṅkara’s strictly orthodox absolutism, tried very early to adopt Gauḍapāda’s teaching to suit their own systems. Thus Maṇḍana who openly opposes some of Śaṅkara’s cardinal tenets, nevertheless quotes the well-known Kārika कार्यकारणबद्धौ ताविष्येते विश्वतैजसौ । प्राज्ञः कारणबद्धस्तु द्वौ तौ तुर्ये न सिध्यतः (GK. 1-11) to support his special creed that the perturbation of the mind continues to exist in sound sleep in a latent condition along with causal ignorance (Br. S. p. 22, 144). Even before Śaṅkara there had been systems who believed with Maṇḍana that over and above the knowledge obtained through śruti some sort of mystic practice was necessary to arrive at the final realisation. They relied upon such texts as विज्ञाय प्रज्ञां कुर्वीत (Br. 4-4-21) which apparently teach prajñā (realisation) which has to come subsequent to Vijñāna (scriptural knowledge). Sureśvara was a liberal thinker who did not hesitate to assimilate doctrines of other schools¹ so long as they did not clash with the tenor of

1. A comparison of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Vārtika* with *Brahma-siddhi* would reveal a startling similarity between the two works in terminology and verbatim quotations sometimes very slightly adapted.

his own absolutism. But when it came to the question of the intuition of the immediate and eternal Reality, the Advaita Ātman, he was the last person either to give or to ask for quarter. Regardless of the fact that his opponent attempted to take shelter under the authority of a dubious text or of an honoured name such as that of the great Gauḍapāda, he relentlessly exposed the inconsistencies of all theories which called in the aid of Yōga, or continued contemplation of Vākya-jñāna, whether for the purpose of attaining ultimate realisation or for making knowledge strong enough to ward off all Avidyā. A school aiming at the latter end propounded the theory of a two-fold ignorance, natural and adventitious नैसर्गिक्यागन्तुकी चेति (Br. V. 4-4-88) enveloping the self and the not-self respectively. While the adventitious ignorance obscuring the external objects could be effectively dispelled by knowledge once for all, natural ignorance, they said, was liable to revive even after its destruction by knowledge, and might sally forth again. They, therefore, thought that a continued vigilant and active course of mystical discipline was necessary until the whole mind secured final absorption in Brahman. The mighty name of Gauḍapāda was invoked in support of this doctrine, and two of his Kārikās were quoted as implying it¹ : तत्त्वमाध्यात्मिकं दृष्ट्वा तत्त्वं दृष्ट्वा तु बाह्यतः । तत्त्वीभूतस्तदारामस्तत्त्वादप्रच्युतो भवेत् ॥ यदा न लीयते चित्तं न च विक्षिप्यते पुनः । अनिङ्गनमनाभासं निष्पन्नं ब्रह्म तत्तदा ॥ (Gk. 2-38,

A number of arguments are found to be bodily taken over into the Vārtika from *Brahma-siddhi*, which circumstance has led many to believe in the identity of Maṇḍana and Sureśvara.

1. It is in this connection that Gauḍapāda's name is directly mentioned in the Vārtika.

3-46). The content of the first sloka¹, the reader will recollect, points to the resultant knowledge accruing to one who realises the metaphysical identity and unreality of both waking and dream. The second sloka is², as Śaṅkara shows, meant for those that cannot rise to the height of Vedantic reflection which directly reveals the sole reality of Ātman आत्मसत्यानुबोधेन. Sureśvara was unsparing in his criticisms against all such aberrations of minds that could not appreciate the worth of Vedantic Absolutism. The *Bhāvanāvāda* (doctrine of meditation) of Bhartṛprapaṇca, the *Asaṃsr̥ṣṭa jñānavāda* (doctrine of unrelational knowledge) of schools akin to Maṇḍana's, and the *Prasaṅkhyāna vāda* (doctrine of stabilization of knowledge) of Brahmadatta and others, are equally faulty in Suresvara's eyes, because they all fail to see that Ātmajñāna is only the shaking off our ignorance of an eternally inalienable immediacy. निद्रान्वः सन् यथा स्वप्ने ह्यग्नि-
व्याघ्रादिसंगतेः । निद्रास्वप्नप्रहाणेन बोधमात्रार्थभाग्भवेत् । प्रत्यगज्ञानसंभूत-
नानात्वोत्थप्रबोधतः । प्रध्वंसादात्ममोहस्य तदैकात्म्यं समश्नुते ॥ (Br. V. 4-4-840, 841) Sureśvara is here comparing enlightenment by teaching, to the sudden awakening of a dreamer after encountering a forest-fire or a wild tiger in the dream itself.

4. Interpretation of Gaudapāda After Sureśvara's Time

Later Vedāntins who have succumbed to the temptation of speculation and textual interpretation, have not

1. Śaṅkara's commentary here warns against the very misinterpretation which Sureśvara has severely condemned.

2. Prof. V. Bhaṭṭācārya smells here the contact of Buddhistic Vijñānavāda and Vedānta. The *Prasaṅkhyānavādin*, of course, is for a welding of Vedānta and yōga of a particular kind.

lagged behind in offering their due meed of praise to Gauḍapāda even while they have missed the true track of Vedāntic dialectic pointed out by that master-mind. *Pañcapādika* the earliest sub-commentary on Śaṅkara's *Sūtra Bhāṣya* available, leaves us in no doubt that it flies off at a tangent in its treatment of Avidyā as a *śakti* or force which has to be taken for granted as inhering in the very nature and existence of things external and internal, since illusory appearance could not be otherwise accounted for. अवश्यमेषा अविद्याशक्तिर्बाह्याध्यात्मिकेषु वस्तुषु तत्स्वरूपसत्तामात्रानुबन्धिनी अभ्युपगन्तव्या । अन्यथा मिथ्यार्थावभासानुपपत्तेः ॥ (PP. p. 4). He who runs may read the glittering differences between this speculative doctrine and Gauḍapāda's reasoning based upon solid facts of intuition and experience. Yet this commentator feels no qualm of conscience in interpreting Gauḍapāda (अनादिमायया सुप्तः GK 1-16) as vouching for his postulate that the individual soul is limited by this fancied power of Avidyā or māyā which hinders it from recognizing its identity with Brahman : अतो मायावच्छिन्नरूपत्वादनन्यदपि ब्रह्मरूपमात्मनो न वेत्ति । तथा चोक्तम् - अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते । अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा ॥ इति (PP. p. 15). Surely Gauḍapāda never dreamt that his absolutism could be dragged down to this realistic turn of thought or that his Kārikā making a statement of saving knowledge based upon universal experience, could be pressed into service to prop up a hypothetical mysterious force indifferently called avidyā or māyā.

It will be remembered that while Śaṅkara mostly emphasises the Satkāryavāda based upon theory of illusory causation throughout his *Sūtra Bhāṣya*, he neverthe-

less takes care to maintain the traditional teaching about the three avasthās intact by declaring that the waking world is as unreal as the dream world. न च वियदादि सर्गस्याप्यात्यन्तिकं सत्यत्वमस्ति । प्रतिपादितं हि 'तदनन्यत्वमारम्भणशब्दादिभ्यः' इति समस्तस्य प्रपञ्चस्य मायामात्रत्वम् । अतो वैशेषिकमिदं स्वप्नस्य मायामात्रत्वमुदितम् ॥ (S. Bh. 3-2-4). He also observes, in unambiguous terms, that the ego becomes one with Brahman in sound sleep and the like states, येन ब्रह्मणा सुषुप्त्यादिषु जीव उपाध्युपशमात् संपद्यते (S. Bh. 3-2-11). Vācaspati Misra, author of the Bhāmātī, the famous sub-commentary on *Sūtra Bhāṣya*, however, is either reticent on such occasions, or else gives expression to his pet doctrine - taken over from Maṇḍana - that layalakṣaṇāvidyā persists in those states. He does not, as far as I am aware refer to Gauḍapāda anywhere, so as to enable us to see his definite attitude towards the method of the three avasthās. In any case, we may presume that he, with Maṇḍana, does not attach much importance to that dialectic since he equates Śravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāṣana, the three immediate means to enlightenment, with the two steps of yōgic discipline dhāraṇā and dhyāna, while he thinks that darśana is samādhi. अत्र श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्य इति धारणोपदेशः । निदिध्यासितव्य इति ध्यानोपदेशः, द्रष्टव्य इति समाधेरुपदेशः । (Bha. 2-3-39). Evidently he contemplated a coalition of Vedānta and Yōga, as did Prakāśātman later on in his famous *Vivaraṇa* कदाचिदसंप्रज्ञातात्मैकत्वदर्शनं कदाचिदारब्धकर्मोपस्थापितदोषनिमित्तद्वैतदर्शनं चेति ॥ (PV p. 284). Of course this innovation is diametrically opposed to Gauḍapāda's dictum (GK 1-17) that ātman is always Niṣprapañca (free from all duality) as

well as to Śaṅkara's irrefutable argument that the Vedāntic text 'That thou art' referring to universal present time cannot by any ingenious interpretation be twisted so as to restrict it to any particular state : न चायं व्यवहाराभावोऽवस्थविशेष निबद्धोऽभिधीयत इति युक्तं वक्तुम् । तत्त्वमसीति ब्रह्मात्मभावस्यानवस्था विशेषनिबन्धनत्वात् ॥ (S. Bh. 2-1-14).

Coming down to recent times when both Vivaraṇa and Bhāmatī schools of interpretation came to be welded into one, we are confronted with a new twist of the avasthātraya teaching. The author of the *Pancadaśī* has brought forward a new theory that viśva, taijasa and prājña are the names of the individual self conditioned by the gross, the subtle and the causal body (or, ignorance), respectively while Vaiśvānara, Hiranyagarbha and Īśvara are the names of Paramātmā conditioned by the collective gross, subtle and causal bodies (PD 1-16 to 28). It will be noted that in strange contradiction of Gauḍapāda's statement (GK 1-1) that Viśva is 'Vibhu' (all-pervading), the term now becomes a misnomer for the shrunken self with a limited body, whilst prājña, the ghana-prajña, is degraded into the self enveloped in ignorance¹. Not content with thus much, this writer proceeds to prescribe Pātāñjala Yōga for the removal of obstructions to realisation (PD 1-60 to 65). The whole chapter is well-worth perusal by scholars who wish to study the vicissitudes of Gauḍapāda's tenets down the ages.

Ever since the time of Vidyāraṇya, it has become the fashion for Vedāntic writers to identify the Ātma-

1. For an elaboration of this dichotomy of Viśva and Vaiśvānara etc. see *Siddhānta Leśa Sangraha* pp. 92-100 (Chaukhamba Edition).

satyānubōdha of Gauḍapāda extolled as *Asparśa yōga* with *nirvikalpa samādhi* of the Pātañjalas. As instances in point may be cited *Pancadaśī* (2-24) and *Jīvanmukti Viveka* (JV Manōnāśa-prakaraṇa p. 80). In some cases, they have even gone to the length of saying that Māṇḍūkyaōpaniṣad merely enjoins the meditation of the identity of viśva and Virāt, taijasa and Hiraṇyagarbha, and, therefore, that *Sarvajñatva* (omniscience) of Prājña is not to be taken seriously¹. The curious reader is referred to the Hindi Vṛtti Prabhākara (VP 8-18, pp. 353-355. Venkateśa Steam Press).

Section Six

Retrospect And Conclusion

1. Retrospect

It is now time for us to have a look at the ground we have traversed so far and take stock of what we have now left with us. We have seen that there are not sufficient grounds to disturb the traditional opinion that Māṇḍūkya is a genuine Upaniṣad and that Gauḍapāda is the author of all the four chapters of Kārikās attributed to him. The chapters proceed in an orderly manner in expounding the tri-basic method of Vedānta which considers all aspects of life and convincingly reveals Reality as the unchanging Pure Consciousness invariably intuited

1. That, really, reference to Omkāra and Vaiśvānara etc, has primarily nothing to do with meditation, is well-known to readers of Śaṅkara's Commentary on the Māṇḍūkya with the *Āgamaprakaraṇa*. This has been explained at great length by the present writer in his *Māṇḍūkya Rahasya Vivṛti*.

as the witnessing principle in us. The first chapter summarises the results of an examination of the three states and shows how our self is really the Absolute transcending all duality of words and thoughts on the one side and objects expressible or thinkable on the other. The second chapter enters into an impartial comparison of waking and dream, and arrives at the conclusion that both states with their contents are māyic manifestations of the non-dual Ātman. The third chapter clarifies how the Absolute remains unaffected amidst its seeming manifestations, while the fourth seeks to show how, even the purely rationalistic systems, being partial to the waking state, are in conflict with one another, and even so, indirectly point to the truth of the absolutistic doctrine revealed in Vedānta.

We have weighed certain modern theories, some urging that Vedānta is more or less identical with the Vijñānavāda of the Buddhists and some surmising that Gauḍapāda is indebted to Mahāyānic writings for his terminology and method of reasoning. It was seen that Buddhistic reasoning being confined to the waking standpoint, is intrinsically different from the Vedāntic reasoning covering all the three states and the unborn, constant, non-dual Vijñānam, Brahman of Vedānta, has very little in common with the stream of momentary consciousness postulated by the Yōgācāras and Vijñānavādins. We also found that where, especially in the fourth chapter, Gauḍapāda seems to have freely made use of certain terms and thoughts of Mahāyāna Buddhism, he has pressed them into service only to show that the terms have their full significance with reference to Vedāntic concepts and

that the reasonings become more convincing when applied to facts of experience to which attention is drawn exclusively in Vedānta. Again, we clearly saw that the nature of Vedāntic Absolute and the method of approach to reach it, are entirely different from the absolutes and the methods of approach accepted in Mahāyānic Systems. And finally, we have traced in a rough outline the various turns that Gauḍapāda's teaching took in the course of time and saw how Vedānta gained or lost its value as one of the highest systems of thought the world has ever witnessed.

2. The Use Of Vedāntic Knowledge

What is the effect of this Vedāntic knowledge on practical life ? Gauḍapāda has not made any attempt to answer this question at length, but he has given us sufficient hints at the end of his work¹ to enable one to guess the trend of this opinion in the matter. According to him a person who has realised his identity with the Absolute, becomes a Brāhmaṇa in the highest sense of the term, and that implies in Vedāntic parlance an ideal comprehending all that is best in life, physically, mentally, morally and sociologically. Witness the śruti : अथ ब्रह्मणः “And then is he, indeed, a real Brāhmaṇa” (Br 3-5-1). He obtains Sarvajñatā (omniscience) also; not that he comes to know everything about everything in some occult manner, but knowing as he does the one reality underlying all the phenomenal Universe, he is beset with no more doubts or difficulties due to ignorance of the one thing worth knowing. He becomes free from the trammels

1. See GK 4-85, 86, 92 and 93.

of feverish activity (किमतः परमीहते) for the sake of the baubles and trinkets of life such as sensual enjoyment, wealth, power and fame which the common man hankers after in his ignorance. Vedāntic knowledge being the complete effacement of ignorance and passions, the wise man's moral perfections are permanent, for they are the very nature of Brahman with which he is identical for ever. *Vinaya*, *śama-dama*, modesty and self-control, become his inherent characteristics requiring no special effort to keep them up. He has discovered the precious truth that from the very beginning everyone without exception possesses intrinsic wisdom (आदिबुद्ध 4-92) and freedom from all bondage of duality (आदिशान्त 4-93) and unalloyed bliss (सुनिर्वृत 4-94). All souls enjoy, in his eyes, perfect equality in respect of this nature, if only they could know it. Such is the firm conviction of the enlightened man, who has been fortunate enough to attain this secret knowledge.

3. Concluding Remarks

It only remains for me to conclude with a few words in praise of the Vedāntic System in general and Gauḍapāda in particular. Gauḍapāda as well as the system of thought for which he stands, has been praised and blamed, highly flattered and severely condemned, by enthusiastic admirers and carping critics. Advaita Vedānta has been compared and contrasted with many a system eastern and western, and varying judgments have been given for or against it. When everything has been said, the fact remains that Vedānta is the only way of thinking that claims to study life in all its aspects in a scientific

manner. It treats of truth, wisdom and happiness, subjects of eternal interest to mankind. The credit of having brought to the notice of thinkers, the value of its all-comprehensive method revealed in Upaniṣads and of having successfully built an impregnable system on that solid basis, will ever belong to Gauḍapāda.

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